

BUT "THOU SHALT FORGET THE SHAME OF THY YOUTH":
A Study of Authoritarianism, Religiosity and Child Sexual
Abuse

A Professional Project
Presented to
the Faculty of the
School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
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May 1987

This professional project, completed by

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of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Faculty Committee

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ABSTRACT

BUT 'THOU SHALT FORGET THE SHAME OF THY YOUTH':

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Abuse

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This Doctoral Project addresses the sexual theology of the Christian church and how it relates to child sexual abuse. The project deals first with an analysis of the history of Christian sexual ethics from the perspective of the Roman Catholic experience, the conservative Christian experience, and the liberal Protestant experience. The conclusion is reached that in none of the three cases did Christianity arrive at the twentieth century equipped to deal with the major shifts in paradigms in sexual behavior which came about as a result of the advent of the birth control pill. Consequently, the Church finds itself running to catch up with technology in the area of ethics and in need of a major overhaul in the area of the theology of embodiment. The area of Christendom most equipped by foundational ethics and theology to handle this task is Liberal Protestantism. But the suggestion is made that accommodations can be made by both Conservative Christianity and Roman Catholicism to "move into the twentieth century" in the area of sexual theology.

This problem directly affects the issue of child sexual abuse. The fact that failure of modern Christianity

to address sexual theology impacts the social problem of child sexual abuse is shown by a socio-psychological study used in the paper which asserts that child sexual abusers are "more religious and more authoritarian" than average. The practical results of child sexual abuse on the organization of the family is explored in addition to the study of child sexual abusers normed with a control group.

The conclusion of the project suggests several practical steps for the church in the area of sexual theology and of child sexual abuse in general. The suggestion is that the church by becoming aware and informed become part of the healing of the problem instead of, by default or action, part of the problem.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Scope of the Problem

Importance of the Problem

This project deals with the problem of child sexual abuse and the statements found in the literature of those working in the area of treating such disorders which assert that the average child molestor is more authoritarian and often more religious than average (Summitt, 1983, p. 182).

My hypothesis is that there will be a high correlation between the child sexual abuser's religion and his authoritarianism as well as his tendency to autocracy in family relationships. If my hypothesis proves true, the implications for social policy are readily seen, as many Christian groups today lobby for a return to a traditional family-oriented public social policy. Ideology that upholds a patriarchal family with male authority and female/child submission may be the soil in which child sexual abuse is nurtured.

I have encountered such a denial around the subject of child sexual abuse that I have been amazed. Society wants to deny that incest ever happens and churches, pastors, and church-related groups are part of that denial. In a monthly case conference of various Southern California pastors, the subject was child sexual abuse for about six months. Expert after expert was heard; yet most pastors still did not want to believe the facts that a majority of

family members who sexually abuse children were more prone to be authoritarian and religious than not. Many of these pastors wanted to believe that the "dirty old man", usually homosexual, preyed on children, mostly boys. Some wanted to believe that a religious "conversion experience" would automatically solve the problem and that any "religious" male who would molest children, especially his own, would be one who had not truly had the conversion experience to Jesus. In contrast, the facts are that in more than 95% of the cases the molestor is a heterosexual-identified male and the victim is a female child (Summitt, 1983, p.180). Even in the case of the molestation of boys, the offender is less concerned with the fact that the child is a male than with the fact that the child is a child. For this reason these people are labeled "pedophiles." Further, in more than 90% of the cases the offender is a trusted friend or relative, someone the child knows (Summitt, 1983, p.180). And conversion experience seems to make little difference in the propensity to molest (Odell, n.d. p. 1). Rather, the offender, often a molested child himself and the victim of someone else who was religious, seems to be caught in a "repetition compulsion" in a vain attempt to heal the wounds within himself (Odell, n.d.p.1). This is the problem.

The emotional trauma that incest leaves in its wake is an important subject for the church, The church must look at how it perpetrates the problem through denial and take

steps to protect the children of our society. In other words, the church must become part of the solution. In order to do this, the church must begin to address these issues and begin to make the church a sanctuary for incest victims of all ages rather than for the perpetrators. Problems which may not look on the surface to be incest-related, such as running away from home, may be a symptom of an incest problem. I counseled one woman who had repeatedly run away from her incestuous grandfather who was brought back on more than one occasion to her pastor--who disbelieved her story and promptly returned her to her grandfather every time. The pastor had assumed that she was just a rebellious teenager who made up awful stories about this pillar of the church! My work with this woman in healing the breach of trust with the pastor--God's agent--was more difficult than dealing with the initial incestuous relationship (Anonymous counselee, personal communication, 1977).

Further, the church must look at its own sexual ethics. I believe that the spiritualized Victorian nineteenth century sexuality with which we have all been raised cannot be Biblically justified. And I further believe that this theology contributes to the problem because it does not take into account the strength of sexuality, particularly male sexuality and because it does not deal with the demonic aspects of repression. I find very few people, male or female, who can live up to the Victorian sexual ethic which

grows out of this sexual theology. Even though this theology has been Biblicized and sanctioned by the church, the wounding which grows from this theology wounds all of us. It is this aspect I wish to explore: how wounding begets wounding.

I will be examining the theology of sexuality to which every major church subscribed in America until at least the 1970's and why this theology does not issue forth in livable norms for ethical living and never has. Authoritarian religion which interprets the Bible literally and which defines the "sexual boundary" as any sexual act outside of marriage ignores developmental psychology, process theology, and many Biblical themes. Just like temperance fanatics who draw the line at having just one drink, and when that line is crossed, find they cannot stop, so also is the case of the person for whom masturbation is the line in sexual acts. The result of this repressive theology is a society in which there are blacks and whites in sexual behavior--but no grays. As a result, hundreds and thousands of women and children have been wounded by wounded men--and worse, many more continue to be wounded every day. And the voices of these little children cry out for justice. My hope is that this project will be one agent toward that justice.

Definitions:

Child Sexual Abuse: Any sexual activity between an adult and a legally underage person is defined as sexual

abuse, even if the child may "consent". Because of the inherent limitation of power to children in any society in the world today, any adult-child activity must be regarded as abuse. The majority of such abuse is incestuous; i.e., between someone the child knows and trusts and the child. Only a small percentage of child sexual abuse is done by strangers. The harm done in child sexual abuse is in the ultimate betrayal, a betrayal of trust.

Incest: Any sexual activity between the child and any adult in a caretaking role regardless of the blood relationship existing between the two parties is incest. Incest is any sexual touching of any kind by that caretaker which the child perceives as not good.

Work Previously Done in the Field

This is a comparatively new field of study and has evolved out of the the Women's movement of the past decade. Thus, aside from the Kinsey Study of the 1950's, most of the literature has been done in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Perhaps the foremost work done on what happens to the child has been done by Rolland Summitt, Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance, California. He heads the Los Angeles County Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Center and has written a paper, "The Child Sexual Abuse Accommodation Syndrome" published in Child Abuse and Neglect(1983). Summitt characterizes perpetrators as "obviously not perverted. They tend to be hard-working, devoted family men. They may

be better educated, more law-abiding, and more religious than average." Further, Summitt presents the reality as "... (The child) is the victim of unprecedented, relentlessly progressive intrusion of sexual acts by an overpowering adult in a one-sided victim-perpetrator relationship" (Summitt, 1983, p. 182).

Other writers have detailed by case-study method women's stories who were sexually abused as children (Armstrong, 1978). Only now, when the power relationship has been balanced, when the women are adults, do women begin to come forward and tell their stories. Their reactions have been what has been seen in Vietnam veterans as a group and labeled, "The Posttraumatic Stress Disorder" in the DSM-III (FBI, 1984, p. 14). Flashbacks, dysfunctional sexuality, stuffed feelings, and other disorders work to keep the victim a victim. Only when she begins to tell her story and to begin to heal does the problem begin to abate. (Mayer, 1983).

Jeanne Odell, in an article entitled, "Traumatized Child, Distraught Adult", writes about a woman who was sexually abused by her religious father, a conservative Christian and pillar of her church. Odell states, "How dare we say, then, that this deviant behavior occurs among Christians and in Christian homes? Yes, it does happen and often (emphasis supplied). The truth of these incidents is demonstrated through crippled emotions in the lives of the victims." Odell writes from a very religiously conserva-

tive point of view, and her article was printed in Psychology For Living, a publication of the Narramore Christian Foundation of Rosemead, a highly conservative religious organization. As is to be expected, problems are addressed on the individual level and systemic theological or ethical problems are left unexamined (Odell, n.d.).

The case-study method is the methodology of a number of best-selling books, i.e., Kiss Daddy Goodnight by Louise Armstrong (1978) and Daddy's Girl by Charlotte Vale Allen (1982). These books detail the experiences of adults who have been molested as children. Armstrong repeatedly makes the point that "the only thing about incest that is taboo is talking about it. It certainly is becoming obvious that all too many are doing it!" (Armstrong, 1978, p.272). Betrayal of Innocence by Susan Forward and Craig Buck (1978) and Father's Days by Katherine Brady (1979) are also among the case-study method of self-reporting. All these books are narratives of the victims and do not, except incidentally, comment on the perpetrators.

Clinically, a number of authors have written, again primarily on treatment for the victim. Child Sexual Abuse by David Finkelhor (1984), Father-Daughter Incest by Judith Lewis Herman (1981), Suzanne M. Sgroi (1983) Handbook of Clinical Intervention in Child Sexual Abuse, and other clinical books detail treatment for the victim. Most pay only passing attention to the perpetrator. Further, I can find no studies which examine Dr. Summitt's premise

that "perpetrators are...more than average religious". Nor does any study analyze the relationship of Christian sexual theology and child sexual abuse. Thus the purpose for my present study.

Two sociological studies are available: Thou Shalt Not Be Aware: Society's Betrayal of the Child, by Alice Miller (1984); and Incest: A Family Pattern by Jean Renvoise (1982). The former is a new study and the latter a psychological study of victims and perpetrators with helpful historical data. But overall, there is a paucity of material and material from a Christian perspective is virtually nonexistent.

Scope and Limitations of the Project

I have designed a study of perpetrators--a group of Parents United--men who have been caught, convicted of child molestation, and sentenced to this group as a condition of their rehabilitation; and a control group of a random sample of men who are married (with children in the family) obtained from the Parent-Teacher Association of Long Beach Unified School District as well as colleagues of church members of my church. Part I of the study explores Christian sexual theology and the reasons for its crisis at this time in history. Part II develops the study and evaluates the statistics for significant correlations which would prove or disprove the thesis that child sexual abusers may be more religious, more authoritarian, and tend to more autocratic family styles than average. The paper is

constructed so that the theological part can be separated from the psychological part in order to better facilitate publishing in a theological journal, in a psychological or sociological journal, or together.

Procedure for Integration of
Theology/Socio-Psychology

The project itself deals with the relationships between authoritarianism, religiosity, traditional patriarchal family, and child sexual abuse. The theological work is done using library research, theological inquiry, and earlier works of Christian theologians on human sexuality. Work is done on articulating a new sexual theology, one which will aim at reducing incidences of child sexual abuse within Christianity. The socio-psychological work is done with three instruments--all three studying perpetrators--to indicate authoritarianism, traditional family, and religiosity. The control group and the perpetrators were given the same indices and appropriate correlations measured and compared.

The study is limited to perpetrators. Study of victims is too great a task and abundant literature exists on healing of victims.

CHAPTER 2

Christian Sexual Theology- Mixed Metaphors

Christian Sexual Theology as a Factor in Child Sexual Abuse

When we discuss Christian sexual theology, we must talk about at least three differing historical traditions as they have been understood in American religious tradition. First, we must discuss sexual theology in the Aquinian school as traditionally practiced by Roman Catholics and particularly American Roman Catholics. Secondly, there is the relational theology of American liberal Protestantism as embodied by the neoorthodox and liberal theologians in the early twentieth century. Such august men as Reinhold and H. Richard Niebuhr, and Karl Barth simply continued reformationist theology without a pure treatise on sexual theology. However, in contemporary times much is being made of their theology to revise our traditional thinking on a theology of sexuality. Thirdly, we need to examine a theology of sexuality from the conservative/fundamentalist historical perspective if only from the rationale of the sheer numbers of people this tradition has affected and, because of the mass media, will continue to affect.

Human Sexuality in the Roman Catholic Tradition

To effectively discuss the Roman Catholic tradition, it will be necessary to trace the development of Catholic

theology from the early patristic era. It is here , from the second to the fifth century, that foundations for what I will demonstrate to be an extremely repressive theology were laid.

While the Church Fathers affirmed St. Paul in the Bible regarding the indissolubility of marriage, the need for fidelity, and the mutual duty of spouses, they reinterpreted the Biblical theology in three major ways:

1) In attempting to develop a middle ground between asceticism and licentiousness practiced by the pagans as well as some who called themselves Christians but were later branded "heretics", the Fathers found comfort in Stoicism.

2) From the Stoic idea of the purposefulness of humanity, the Fathers adopted the sexual theology that the purpose for human sexuality was procreation of children. Sexual abstinence was therefore as virtuous after a person was married as before.

3) As a result of such views, there arose a double standard of morality, one for ordinary Christians and one for those who were called to a higher purpose (Kosnik, 1979, p.51).

The church thinker whose ideas tend to be identified with church dogma regarding human sexuality is St. Augustine. While he did do some things to help clarify the sanctity of marriage and to hallow the moral value of the conjugal act, nevertheless, the whole of his teaching on

human sexuality is conflicted and ambiguous. His teachings are decidedly anti-body and he tends to equate the body with sin. Rosemary Reuther, in her essay on "Virginal Feminism in the Fathers of the Church", states,

Augustine believes that the seat ofdisordered affection due to sin is the male penis, whose spontaneous tumescence, in response to sensual stimuli and independent of consciousness, is the literal embodiment of that "law in the members that wars against the law of the minds". Augustine's horrified description of the male erection and its key role in his doctrine of sin and the transmission of original sin usually brings embarrassed laughter from historians of doctrine, if they have the temerity to refer to it at all. It is usually supposed to reflect some personal sexual hang-up of Augustine's resulting from obsessions caused by his illicit sexual experiences, and thus not to reflect on these doctrines themselves. A personal obsession it may well have been, but one that reflected a collective obsession of Augustine's religious culture. Such a pointing to the erection of the penis as the essence of sin was a bit graphic, but nevertheless a perfectly consistent expression of . . . this entire system of theological anthropology of which it was an expression (Ruether, 1974, p.163).

Reuther may be a bit unfairly caricaturing Augustine; it is true that Augustine argued that it was not the body that tempted the soul to sin, but the sin of the soul against God that caused the "war" among the members of the body, which God alone can resolve (Kerr, 1966, p. 66).

James Nelson also gives Augustine a special place in the development of Catholic sexual theology. "One of the fall's clear marks is that the genitals are no longer under our voluntary control, and our insatiable search for self-satisfaction though evident in all spheres of life is

particularly evidenced by the genitals' disobedience" (Nelson, 1978, p.53). Aside from being particularly anti-body, as noted before, this description of sin is also a male perspective, ostensibly referring to involuntary erections, and tends to view sexuality and the genitals as if they were "other than" the male. "Augustine," says Nelson, "does give a marvelously accurate and vivid description of lustful, unloving sex, but, fatefully, he sees no power in love to transform the sex act in any significant way" (Nelson, 1978, p.53).

Again in fairness to Augustine, the fall comes about as a result of the free choice of the soul, not body, and results in alienation from self, neighbor, and God (Kerr, 1966, p. 61). Further, his dualism has more to do with Greek understandings of the sharp divisions of spirit, mind and body than it has to do with sin, for sin corrupts all these "parts" of the human person.

The early fathers continued the dominant Biblical patriarchial hierarchy between male/female to which they added the Greek dualism alluded to earlier. This syncretism resulted in what feminists have seen as a dualism in regard to the treatment of women--Eve as seductress or Mary as Virgin (Reuther, 1974, p.159). This innocence/seductress dichotomy of virginity and innocence may play a part in the whole scenario of child sexual abuse.

The patristic fathers were by and large all affected by the Greek Platonic dualism of the day. Thus the Christian

church shifted from a Biblical "naturalistic religion of this-worldly hope...to an...alienated experience of reality ...expressed in a dualistic doctrine of being (Reuther, 1974, p.151). Because the fathers are by and large neo-Platonists, they accepted for the most part neo-Platonist dualism. This dualism is an ontological dualism, whereas the dualism of the Bible is a not-too-deeply-thought-out observation and description of nature overlaid by faith; a "salvation history." For the Biblical writers, the dualism between the natural and fallen estate is not an ontological category; for the patristics it is. The result of these writings was that by the end of the patristic era the attitude of the church towards sex was in the main suspicious and pessimistic. Yet no clearly defined theology emerged (Nelson, 1978, p. 54).

By the early middle ages, the writings of the "penitentials" reflect that the church had, probably by way of practical necessity, moved some distance from Stoicism in regard to human sexuality. The attitudes towards sexuality were influenced to a large degree by the faulty anthropology prevailing at the time. For example, married couples were exhorted to abstain from sexual intercourse during menstruation because it was thought to deform the baby if one resulted (Kosnik, 1979, p. 56). Further, the sperm were thought to contain a little "humonculus", a perfectly formed miniscule male infant, which traveled to the womb to be incubated there. If the sperm which impreg-

nated the woman encountered any hardship on its hazardous journey, it was said to have been deformed into a female child! Despite the faulty anthropology, this period in Catholic thought in general moved some distance from the body-fearing Stoicism to a more human-centered understanding of human sexuality (Kosnik, 1979, p.58).

With the advent of Scholasticism in the high middle ages, and particularly the theology of Thomas Aquinas, Roman Catholic sexual ethics approached the point at which it stayed from the eleventh century until the nineteenth century. Aquinas views pleasure in the sexual act as not wrong if governed by reason. His natural law theory, however, according to Nelson, led his successors to a kind of sexual laundry list dominated by "thou-shalt-nots".

Procreation remained as the only legitimation of sexual activity. Further, the Thomistic distinction between acts 'in accordance with nature' and acts 'contrary to nature' was diligently maintained. The former type of sexual act preserved the procreative possibility; hence a sexual sin in accordance with nature was a lesser violation of the moral order than was that sin contrary to nature in which procreation was impossible. The lesser violations (though still serious sins) included fornication, adultery, incest, and rape. Acts contrary to nature included masturbation, homosexual acts, and bestiality (Nelson, 1978, p.279). The curious conclusion to which such reasoning could lead is that masturbation is a greater moral evil than is rape (Nelson, 1978, p.57).

But more important to our study here is that masturbation in this system is a greater moral evil than incest. Hence many men raised in the Catholic pre-Vatican II tradition molest their children for a variety of reasons, not the

least of which is the "repetition compulsion" to which we have alluded, but rationalize their choice by alluding to Catholic theology that states that adultery or that masturbation would be a greater moral evil.

It was in the twentieth century that major advances occurred in the area of Catholic moral/sexual theology. Many factors influenced this development, among them new developments in theology which led to a more person-centered approach to sexual ethics and new insights to human sexuality from the behavioral sciences. The advent of birth control pills and easier access to other contraception as well as a growing concern about overpopulation led to the second Vatican Council's consideration of human sexuality in its treatise on The Church in the Modern World. In this treatise the doctrine of the primacy of the procreative is rejected for the unitive in the sexual act. This is a major breakthrough in Catholic thought, but implementation of this theology down to the parish level takes time. The majority of people we will see as ministers and parish priests in the foreseeable future will be people raised under the old, Thomistic theology and accordingly shaped (Kosnik, 1979, p. 67).

Human Sexuality in the Liberal Protestant Tradition

The sixteenth century Protestant reformation did some things to overcome negative sexual theology, but again the theology was ambivalent. Both Luther and Calvin, in their emphasis on salvation by grace alone and not by works of

the law, denounced the monastic tradition which had flourished earlier in the church. Marriage was lifted to at least an equal with celibacy, and in Luther's case was commended above celibacy. But Luther saw marriage as necessity only because of the force of lust. "A positive affirmation of sexuality evaded him" (Nelson, 1978, p. 55).

Luther believed that the shame associated with the sexual union is itself sin and a result of the fall. He believed that the body was in itself neutral and that lustful thoughts proceeded from an evil heart, again a result of the fall. "Vice," according to Luther in his writing, Enarrationes in 1 Mose, "is not cured by abstaining from things given by God but by proper use and governance of them" (Ruether, 1974, p. 298).

Calvin largely agreed with Luther but Calvin emphasized that companionship and not procreation and restraint of lust was the chief end of marriage. Calvin argued in opposition to Luther that the wife, instead of being a receptacle for the seed of the male and a "proper" object of his desire, was instead to be a lifelong friend and companion of him. However, Calvin's doctrine of the absolute depravity of fallen humanity mitigated this doctrine and the ambiguity of sexuality and moral theology continued in this bipolar fashion through the next few centuries. (For a fuller explanation of this trait in Calvin, the reader is directed to Demosthenes Savramis' book, The Satanizing of Woman: Religious Versus Sexuality,

Doubleday, 1974, page 78 and following.) (Nelson, 1978, p.56).

The theology of the reformers paved the way for liberal Protestantism to lessen the effects of Catholic sexual theology. But the positive strains which the reformers opened were mitigated in the West during the nineteenth century by the Victorian era. On the one hand, the evangelical revivals of the period paved the way for a new humanitarianism. There was an increased fervor for the poor, for education (the Sunday School movement), and for working conditions (Walker, 1918, p.502). But on the other hand, the Victorian morality of the times ensured that sexuality and treatment of women and pre-marital sex was censured heavily.

Hilary and Mary Evans, in their work, The Victorians: At Home and at Work state:

The Victorians were great crusaders. When they had got hold of a cause, they would fight for it doggedly--Plimsoll for the living conditions of sailors, Shaftesbury for the working conditions of factory children, Florence Nightingale for better hospital conditions, Stead for child prostitutes. But not every crusader was successful; no crusade can for long succeed if it runs counter to human nature or the spirit of the times. The crusaders against 'sensational' literature could clean up the worst excesses of the pornography trade, but they could not ultimately succeed because humans are naturally interested in scandal and sex. (Evans & Evans, 1973,p.85)

This was the age of devices placed upon children at night to keep them from touching their genitals. This was the age of women begging their doctors for clitoridectomies

because they were enjoying sex--and worse, doctors accommodating them (Hellerstein, 1981, p.177). This was the age of sexual hypocrisy, in which an evangelical morality exhorted a sex-negative standard which went counter to natural impulses.

It is not too much to say that, more than any other single factor, the Evangelical Movement in the Church of England transformed the whole character of English society and imparted to the Victorian age that moral earnestness which was its distinguishing characteristic: a moral earnestness which was perhaps especially conspicuous in the Victorian agnostics of the 1800's who inherited it from the Evangelical tradition itself against which they were in rebellion (BBC, 1949, p.9).

This mechanism of sexual repression issued forth in its own opposite in obsession with sexual fantasies. This can be seen in the Victorian underculture (Hellerstein, 1981, p.411). Thus Victorian society was a schizoid society in regard to morals and moral theology.

Miller (1984), in her study Thou Shalt Not Be Aware, states:

If we picture [Freud's] readers, the women of the bourgeoisie of that day, with their elegant long dresses that hid their ankles, and the men with their stiff white collars and faultlessly cut suits (for it can hardly be supposed that his books were read by the working class), it is not hard to imagine the outrage and indignation that would have greeted the facts presented above. The indignation would not have been directed against these forms of child abuse per se but against the man who dared to speak about it. For most of these refined people were firmly convinced from an early age that only fine, noble, valiant and edifying deeds and subjects ought to be talked about publicly and that what they as adults did behind closed doors in their elegant bedrooms very definitely had no place in print. Satisfying sexual desires with children was nothing bad in

their eyes as long as silence was preserved, for they were convinced that no harm would be done to the children unless the matter was discussed with them. Therefore, the acts they performed were shrouded in silence, as if children were dolls, for they firmly believed a doll would never know or tell what had been done to it. In order to ensure discretion, children were not sexually enlightened; their erotic activities--such as touching their genitals or masturbating--and any show of interest in sexual matters were forbidden. At the same time, they were raised in the Spirit of the Fourth Commandment (honor thy father and mother), and their entire life was dominated by the principle of respect for their parents. Children thus had to come to terms, without anyone to help them, with the irreconcilable contradiction that it was filthy and depraved to touch their own genitals but that it was also wrong of them not to allow an adult to play with their body (Miller, 1984, p.153)

This legacy is the heritage continued to the liberal-fundamentalist split in American Christendom in the 1920's and the legacy which all Protestants in America inherited.

The Neo-Orthodox Movement in the mid-twentieth century saw some progress being made in moral theology, but again the theology as a whole was ambiguous and erratic. H. Richard Niebuhr (1963) laid the foundation for a progressive moral theology with the articulation of a theology of "response" in his book The Responsible Self and other writings.

In Niebuhr's terms, the question "What shall I do?" may be answered in three ways: "I shall do what is right;" "I shall do what is good;" and "I shall do what is best or fitting."

Niebuhr categorizes those persons who would answer the question by raising as prior the question, "What is right?"

as those who would categorize human beings as primarily citizen. These persons are called deontologists, from deontos--the duty. Deontologists would understand history as understanding the laws the citizens of history were obeying. And deontologists would characterize human sexuality as a set of laws built into the scheme of things by which all persons would be compelled to obey. Christian deontologists would characterize sexual behavior as a God-given set of rules and regulations (those rules found in the Bible) by which human persons must conduct their sexual activities or be found outside grace.

Those persons who would answer the question by raising as prior the question, "What is my goal or ideal?" are called teleologists. Teleologists--from telos--understand anthropology and sociology as human beings in society and community. They understand history as understanding what ideals the society was striving toward, and would characterize human sexuality as striving toward the highest good, that which is set forth in nature. Christian teleologists, many of whom are Roman Catholic, follow Aquinas in defining the "highest good" in sexuality to be the procreation of children. They would therefore characterize as "good" anything that could be demonstrated to produce a child, and "bad" anything that could not, as has already been stated.

According to Niebuhr, a better approach toward moral theology is through relationalism. Relationalists are those persons who would answer the question by raising the

prior question, "What is the most appropriate, or responsible, thing to do?" A relationalist would understand sociology and anthropology as describing human beings in relationship. History is understood best as a description of the question, "To what challenges was the society or individual responding?" Relationalists characterize human sexuality as responding to what is most appropriate or most fitting. A Christian relational ethicist would ask the question, "What is the most responsible thing to do in this sex-relational situation?" regardless of the rule, or highest good. Actions would be characterized as more or less responsible according to a continuum rather than a two-sided, dualistic, "right-wrong" judgment.

Although Niebuhr's work was an important groundwork for modern sexual ethicists such as Nelson, other Neo-Orthodox theologians were not so charitable. Barth, for instance, "rejects any view that would make men and women equal, because the sexual differentiation itself is the sign of limitation proper to the creature. Where the relation is one of equality and oneness in being in the Trinity, in (hu)mans the relation is one of duality and inequality" (Ruether, 1974, p.325). Barth thought that neither man nor woman was complete without the other and from that incompleteness issued the functional difference in roles. Should woman attempt to overcome that differentiation she falls into the sin of pride. Although Barth's writings on human sexuality itself were limited, by extension of this

theology, he has contributed to the current silence in liberal Protestantism in the area of child sexual abuse.

In Barth's theology, obedience plays a key role. Woman (and child) must be obedient to man. Here "the qualitative difference between God and humans has been extended to man and woman/child" (Ruether, 1974. p.325). The emphasis is on authority of man and obedience and subservience in women and children. Thus woman receives her sexuality only from man and by logical extension has no independent sexuality on her own. Of course, neither does man have an independent sexuality on his own--the key difference is that the male position is the dominant one in the complementarity. Children are to be obedient to the male in the household. But what if the male is sexually abusing the child? Barth did not address this question (Barth, 1960).

Thus liberal Protestantism fared little better than did Thomistic Catholicism in the area of moral theology. Steeped in Victorian Evangelical morality, Liberal Protestantism arrived to the latter half of the twentieth century almost as ill-equipped to deal with the sexual revolution as Roman Catholicism.

Human Sexuality in Conservative/Fundamentalist

Moral Theology

The history of conservative and fundamentalist Christian moral theology parallels that of liberal Protestantism until the liberal/fundamentalist split of the 1920's, at which point the paths diverge quite

considerably. This parallel must be modified by a brief discussion of the strains of Anabaptist and Puritan piety manifest in modern fundamentalism and conservatism.

The Anabaptist influence can be seen in the emphasis on a church life drawn apart from a corrupt culture, and evangelistic zeal, and a determination to transform the political community into the kingdom of God (Fackre, 1982, p.13). Puritan piety is manifest in an abhorrence of "pleasure" and hedonistic practice; indeed, some might interpret conservative/fundamentalist pronouncements as totally anti-body, anti-pleasure, anti-world. H. Richard Niebuhr (1951) would characterize this Christianity as a manifestation of the stance of Christ against Culture. Many are more legalistic and rationalistic than liberal Protestants. There may be a conspicuous religious nationalism married to fundamentalism.

Gabriel Fackre (1982) in his book about the religious right, lists a typology of Christian conservatives/fundamentalists that would include the following:

1. Fundamentalists are characterized by an adherence to "seven fundamentals" including Biblical inerrancy, separatism, sectarian strains, and a militancy in defense of its doctrines.

2. Old Evangelicals or born-again Christians stress the conversion experience and holiness, and are not typically militant or usually apocalyptic.

3. New Evangelicals insist on the relevance of faith

to culture, stress intellectual ability and orthodoxy. They roughly correspond to the readership of Christianity Today.

4. Justice and Peace Evangelicals express their faith in more radical political and ecclesial action and they can be exemplified by periodicals also: The Other Side and Sojourners. These Christians, from Anabaptist/high Calvinist perspectives, critique Christian accommodation to American culture.

5. Charismatic Evangelicals are sometimes apolitical but are increasingly social action-oriented, and emphasize charismata as listed in 1 Corinthians 12-14 (Fackre, 1982, p.18).

During the era of the fundamentalist-liberal split in America in the 1920's, polemic waxed loud and strident concerning the "modernism" of the liberals. In reaction to this "modernism," fundamentalists (whose "five points of fundamentalism" had been articulated at the beginning of the controversy late in the nineteenth century at the wane of the Victorian era), went sharply the other way. These "five fundamentals" included the inerrancy of Scripture, the deity of Jesus, the virgin birth, the substitutionary atonement, and the bodily resurrection and return of Jesus (Walker, 1918, p.517).

By 1930 the resolute drive to oust liberals from their denominations had failed for fundamentalists, and they withdrew into independent churches and splinter

denominations.

From these splinter denominations grew modern fundamentalism. It is interesting to note that, in the beginning, these churches were absolutely quietist in the social sphere. In fact, documents of the early preaching of such activist fundamentalists as Jerry Falwell reveal that this quietism was evident throughout the 1960's (Young, 1982, p.27). Then, for a variety of reasons, not the least an apprehension of the viability of the activist tactics of the liberal church, fundamentalism burst forth in the late 1970's and early 1980's with an activism unequalled in history. Largely due to the electronic media, these new fundamentalists have gained a large audience from whence to level their attacks on the sexual mores of society.

In matters sexual, fundamentalists have entrenched themselves in Victorian morality. Fackre says about the fundamentalist:

Violation of sexual norms and the theoretical legitimization of this breakdown come under the severest attack: homosexual practice and its defense as an "alternative lifestyle"; abortion and its pro-choice ideologues; pre-marital sex, adultery, and divorce, sex education in the public school--which is believed to encourage sexual promiscuity; feminism and its alleged denial of the hierarchical family order, encouragement of lesbianism and general promiscuity, and destruction of true femininity; governmental endorsement and encouragement of feminist goals; promulgation in the media, especially television and cinema, of all the foregoing; the beat of rock music and the rhythms and habitat of the disco which contribute to the atmosphere of moral degeneracy; the easy availability of modern literature, with its sexual promiscuity and deviancy in public schools and public libraries; the pornographic

magazine and book trade which feeds on contemporary prurience; the liberal church's flirtation with situation ethics in its teaching on sexuality; and the general breakdown of family life manifested in and facilitated by all these trends (Fackre, 1982, p.8)

Alongside the near-obsession with the sexual sins of society, emphasis on authoritarianism also has been taken to the extreme. If Barth emphasized the authority of the male, the fundamentalist is super-authoritarian. The fundamentalist can be said to have allowed the male to usurp the role of God in male domination, a charge leveled at Barth by Romero, to the extreme (Ruether, 1974, p.324).

Given these repressive views toward sex education and sexuality in general, it comes as no surprise that experts charge that child sexual abusers are more authoritarian and tend to be more religious than the general population (Summitt, 1983, p.182).

Our study will presently bear this out. One problem of fundamentalist/conservative moral theology is that it too narrowly defines "the line" beyond which one may not cross. Acts are seen in black and white with no grays. There is no understanding of continuums in this theology. When one is taught the maxim of Jesus that to think a sin is as bad as to do it, why not go ahead and do it? So if one is thinking thoughts about one's child, for some it is not so hard a step to the act of sexual abuse. For others, the theology that children are one's property and male authoritarianism and theology of obedience leads to rationalization that sexual abuse is permitted. Or perhaps

the low impulse control and previous conditioning leads to the sexual abuse and then the theology is used to rationalize the abuse that has already occurred? Arguments of this sort are rather like arguing which came first, the chicken or the egg. The point is that the theology needs reworking so as to not lend support to a betrayal of trust. The surprising fact that although other types of incest are specifically prohibited in the Bible, incest with one's son or daughter is not prohibited can lead a man who has been taught that the Bible is a rulebook with all the rights and wrongs contained in it to conclude that it is all right to commit incest with his child.

Although this has been a rather lengthy discussion of the theologies which lead us to where we are in moral theology as it applies to child sexual abuse, it has been needful to apprehend a historical picture of the failure of American Christendom to respond to the crisis of child sexual abuse. Although liberal Protestantism has given us the best tools to deal with the crisis, the tools need now to be honed and begun to be used. We now turn to the task of explicitly articulating the problem as we have it today.

The Child Sexual Abuse Problem
in American Society Today

The typical offender in child sexual abuse is not obviously "perverted". They tend to be hard-working, devoted family men who appear on the average to be more educated, law-abiding and religious than average. Summitt

says:

The prevailing reality for the most frequent victim of child sexual abuse is not a street of schoolground experience and not some mutual vulnerability to oedipal temptation, but an unprecedented, relentlessly progressive intrusion of sexual acts by an overpowering adult in a one-sided victim-perpetrator relationship. The fact the perpetrator is often in a trusted and apparently loving position only increases the imbalance of power and underscores the helplessness of the child (Summitt, 1983, p. 182-83).

The FBI manual on pedophilia states:

The incestuous father is typically authoritarian, domineering, and inspires fear in his family (Meiselman, 1978, 57). His demonstration of power typically manifests itself in a tendency to be overcontrolling and overtly restrictive. He may require that his daughter come home directly after school and, [when she is old enough] forbid her to interact socially with boys her own age. Frequently the father exercises control through excessive disciplinary actions or by granting the victim special favors. These favors alienate the victim from the mother as well as siblings, who may be jealous and perceive the child as being spoiled by the father (FBI, 1984, p.7).

Having said all this, let us now deal with the theological and practical problems which arise from this theology as clergy today attempt to grapple with the problem of child sexual abuse.

First to be mentioned is the problem of denial. Often there is an unwillingness on the part of the clergy to admit that such problems exist (at least in their congregations) to the extent that the social service people indicate. The attitude is that since they are Christian people, and God is to some extent with them, they do not have these problems. Churches want to hold to the myth

that their faith in God takes care of all worldly problems. Many clergy are loath to examine just how their theology may help perpetuate child sexual abuse. Repressive sexuality was "the way they learned, the way it's always been done, and the way it should always be done." They fear the consequences of an open and honest stance toward sexuality. They fail to see how repressive sexuality reaps its own reward. As Ruether says, "The by-product of violent libidinal repressiongenerates its own opposite in vivid sensual fantasizing under the guise of antisensual polemics" (Ruether, 1974, p.172). One need only note just how many "Freudian slips" in the church are sexual; just how many hymns and liturgies contained veiled, probably subconscious sexual messages to recognize the truth in Ruether's comment.

Within churches, there is the problem of the myriad ways to approach Biblical interpretation. For the more conservative church, obviously many passages can be interpreted to fortify the authoritarian position of the father. Delaplane states, "A child protective service worker complained to a victim advocate that he went to a house to remove an abused child and was confronted by the father with the objection, 'What do you mean I can't beat my child? I'm a Christian!'" (Delaplane n.d., p.3).

The reality of the situation is that many Catholics have grown up in a pre-Vatican II world in which sex was highly repressed and thus are dysfunctional in this area.

In fact, Catholics are disproportionately represented in the ranks of criminals and child sexual abusers (Renvoize, 1982,p.86). The failure of Thomistic theology in this area is too often demonstrated by the sexual woundedness pastoral counselors see in the lives of Roman Catholics. Kosnik states, "inadequate theology.....fails to formulate the Christian ideal in a manner faithful to fundamental values yet also responsive to the changing historical, sociological, and cultural conditions in which this ideal must be realized" (Kosnik, 1979, p.98).

Liberal Protestants did not escape the fruits of their authoritarian heritage. Clarence Snelling, professor of practical theology at Iliff School of Theology, told me that in his generation, person after person came to him as pastor and told stories of being sexually abused by their fathers. Snelling's generation was the 1920's-world war II generation (Snelling, 1985). While there are signs of redemption on the horizon in liberal Protestantism, the heritage has been, as has been demonstrated, a reaping of theologized Victorian morality. Perhaps liberal Protestants have escaped more lightly than have fundamentalists or Roman Catholics, but the results are there nevertheless.

Fundamentalists have reaped the whirlwind of their reaction to "liberalism" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. " Religion serves, in many ways, to impede the development of flexible thinking processes. This ultimately results in adult thinking that is rigid,

confined, and stereotypical" (Chesen, 1972, p.8). The results of religious dogmatism are psychologically that a religious "fail-safe" is built in to the mind to protect from any new information which might challenge the core of dogmatic faith. A dogmatic thinker is protected by his or her religious fail-safe from the surrounding new input and can avoid and shut out consideration of the conflict altogether. The mind tells the individual simply that he or she is right. His or her "faith" tells him or her so. In this way the dogmatic/authoritarian thinker "is protected from any consideration that he/she might be wrong. Fundamentalism too often thrives on dogmatic thinking" (Chesen, 1972, p.26).

In both Protestant and Catholic fundamentalism, "profound lifelong religious indoctrination may assume the form of a punitive conscience in the adult. This serves to stifle the person's conscious recognition of normal drives; they are therefore unable to deal with them in times of stress" (Chesen, 1972, p.34).

In the case of child sexual abuse, the abuser is often an abused child himself. In these cases, he is often only repeating a behavior that he has learned and in many cases there is a sort of "repetition compulsion" involved--if he can just repeat the experience over and over through his own son/daughter, perhaps he can get it right. In other cases, repressive sexuality has tended to lie dormant in the subconscious, building as the basic sexual drive went

unrequited and finally exploding in child sexual abuse, which the offender may have rationalized as more acceptable than masturbation or sex with a prostitute.

Had the theology of the person allowed him to lead a more permissive life in which the volatile sexual emotions were acknowledged, the person would have been more likely to have been able to allow those drives to be expressed in more socially acceptable ways. As our study will demonstrate, less rigid, more democratic family style and less authoritarianism leads to less sexual abuse. Presumably one of the tenets of democratic child-rearing is openness for children to learn and explore sexuality.

Renvoize states, "it is in sexually severe, not sexually lax, families, that children are most in danger of sexual abuse" (Renvoize, 1982, p.105). And Finkelhor (1979) found that girls with mothers who punished them for asking questions about sex or for exploring their own bodies were 75% more vulnerable to sexual abuse than was the typical girl in the study (Renvoize, 1982, p.98). Thus the open, democratic approach to sexuality leads children out of the path of sexual abuse and to a healthier, happier lifestyle and less social disturbance of the family. But fundamentalist theology does not allow for such flexibility.

T. W. Adorno and his colleagues made a study (1950) on the authoritarian personality shortly after World War II. His raw data suggested that "only fully conscious, very articulate, unconventional Christians are likely to be free

of... authoritarianism" (Adorno, 1950, p.743). His study suggested that either fundamentalist religion produced authoritarians or authoritarians were drawn to fundamentalist religions. But the data suggested that these religions were selected not because of any deep piety but because of the fact that these religions provided a structure in which the authoritarian personality felt safe. Fundamentalism, in short, was effective because it provided the authoritarian personality with a clear-cut list of "do's and dont's"; something "to hold on to" (Adorno, 1950, p. 734).

One such interview by Adorno led to the following conclusions concerning the authoritarian personality and religion: (1) a restrictive superego in which material pleasure is denied and obeying and being obeyed is highly regarded; (2) a compulsive and punitive religious belief; (3) an overly rigid conscience which, however, may show strains of ambivalence; (4) a God-concept which is confused with an earthly, strong, helpful, "father" (Adorno, 1950, p. 737).

This pattern found in the fundamentalist-authoritarian leads to an overly adjusted, conformist individual. He/she both loves and hates the "father" and transfers this ambivalence onto groups and persons with lesser power, both politically and physically. Any person or group who threaten the "status quo" threatens the authoritarian-religious as usurpers of control. The identification of the authori-

tarian character with strength automatically excludes anyone and everything that is regarded as "down", "weak", "non-strength". This is accomplished with moral invectives reinforced by selective proof-texted Biblical Scriptures (Adorno, 1950, p.759).

It is worth noting that the above description of the authoritarian-religious in no way applies only to Christian fundamentalists. Jewish fundamentalists (strict Hasidim) and Moslem Ayatollahs and their followers also exhibit the same degree of rigidity. Everywhere authoritarianism is authoritarianism and fundamentalism is fundamentalism (Adorno, 1950, p.759).

Thus it is that we arrive to the latter part of the twentieth century with a confused and confusing set of Christian/cultural sexual ethics. Adding to this problem is the practical fact that the advent of the birth control pill in the 1950's and 1960's has ushered in a new paradigm in sexual ethics. No longer able to suppress female sexuality with the fear of getting pregnant, society casts about for a new anchor, some new foundation with which to regulate sexual behavior. Some will, no doubt, take refuge in old, secure sexual mores. But this shift in paradigm will not allow, practically, these old forms to function much longer. The confusion we see in the area of sex-role definition, sexual behavior, turmoil in the Western nuclear family, and child sexual abuse are combinations of all these factors to challenge us as Christians to re-think our

moral and sexual theology. It is to this task I now turn.

Healing the Problem: Toward a Christian sexual theology
that can become a part of the solution

As we analyze the three strains of Christianity which we spent some length in the last section reviewing, we find problems within each that will hinder our search for healing our cultural sexual schisms.

Within fundamentalism that same rigidity which creates the authoritarian problem prevents its healing. Further, fundamentalism's extreme individualistic nature focuses any treatises on sexual mores on the individual and not the system. For example, some books on child sexual abuse have begun to surface in the conservative Christian community. One of these is David B. Peters(1986), who has written a book, A Betrayal of Innocence, about child sexual abuse from a conservative Christian standpoint. Some of his insights are valid and certainly anything written for conservative Christians serves to break the silence surrounding child sexual abuse and dispel some of the myths concerning this pervasive problem. For example, Peters recognizes that incest is the real problem for the modern family and tends not to scapegoat "secular humanism" or homosexuals or Communists for these problems. The main problem with the book, in my opinion, is the lack of critique of a system which would through its authoritarian nature and system of Biblical interpretation reinforce the

offender and not the victim.

One of the major things that can be accomplished through the fundamentalist/conservative Christian camp is a commitment to a reinterpretation of the Bible and other Jewish and Christian traditions. Many Bible passages can be interpreted to fortify the defense that "the husband and father is the head of the house and, therefore, can enforce the obedience of his wife or children as he sees fit" (Delaplane, n.d., p.2). But even within the traditional proof texting style of Biblical interpretation, value judgments must be made. Gay rights proponents within the church have long asserted that this type of value judgment is made concerning Levitical law. Persons who condemn homosexuality on the basis of Levitical law regularly admit "maimed" persons to the priesthood, eat shellfish, rare steak, and wear trousers. This, claim proponents of homosexuality, represents a value judgment to adhere to one component of Levitical law and ignore others.

If conservative Christians are intellectually honest they will admit that there are value judgments within the proof text. Given that reality, it is a small thing to begin to emphasize the very high ethic of compassion and justice which is inherent in the overall emphasis of the Bible and specific to certain texts. Many people are leery of the harsh accounts of the Hebrew Scriptures. Yet, it is significant that historically among Jewish people down to the present day the tradition of protection of the

vulnerable is a given. Certainly no one would find justification for abuse of a spouse or child in the teachings of Jesus, and St. Paul's teaching in the epistles regarding parental authority and spousal relations contain mitigations in this regard, upholding the highest standards of mutual respect. In this sense, fundamentalists and conservative Christians may begin to emphasize justice for the child abuse victim while still holding their same method of Biblical interpretation.

Systemic problems within conservative Christianity and fundamentalism are less pliable, because religious institutions are generally accepted, for all of their imperfections, as representative of God. And when teachings occur on "spare the rod and spoil the child", as appeared in a recent article in the Long Beach Press-Telegram, many children find themselves feeling that they are at fault and abuse, physical and/or sexual, is what they deserve since daddy is to be obeyed (Rosemond, 1986). Presently I will set forth an ethic based on agape which will address a tentative solution to some of these systemic problems.

Within the Roman Catholic tradition, teleology mandates that moral theologians grapple with what is the "highest good" for humanity and the world. The question for them, as has been stated, is "What is the goal of this act?" By following the Aquinian tradition of defining the goal of sexual acts as procreation alone, this moral theology has had problems moving into this new moral paradigm with the

advent of the birth control pill. Further assumptions that Aquinas borrowed from Aristotle were false anthropological assumptions about the nature of women. These assumptions can be critiqued based on the same arguments that were used to critique Aquinas' assumptions about human sexuality in the last chapter: that they were based on male observations in "nature". These assumptions led to the erroneous conclusion that nature always intended to produce males so a woman is a man gone wrong (Nelson, 1978, p.63). Again, this point is reinforced by natural law perspective, with the real danger being that woman will be reduced to the procreative role.

The theory of natural law is supposed to have the great advantage of being objectively based and rationally defensible as a basis for moral judgment. Yet when examined closely it is seen to be too narrowly defined as Aquinas has it in that it defines "nature" only in the spatio-temporal sphere. Further, in its detailed prescriptions it become unclear, irrelevant and inapplicable to modern society. If the prescriptions do not become irrelevant they become accommodated to the changes of society. And lastly, as we have demonstrated, they become absurd, as in the case of the masturbation vs. incest dilemma. Therefore, as D.J. O'Conner (1967) concludes, the theory of natural law is, in finality, as relativist as any other (O'Conner, 1967, p. 79).

But neither do we throw the baby out with the bath

water. We cannot deal with our sexuality apart from some understanding of nature. What is being repudiated here is not natural law per se, but Aquinas' particular interpretation of natural law. To consistently reinterpret nature and ourselves is always necessary.

Other problems with the Roman Catholic stance are (1) tradition, particularly those traditions that are grounded in the cultural sexism of the modern times and those traditions which ignore "the growing gap between what the Catholic Church officially teaches in matters sexual and what the faithful have come to believe and practice" (Kosnik, 1979, p.98), and (2) the authority of the Pope. The latter may be interpreted as a sign of advance or conservatism depending on the persuasion of the Pope. This present Pope has not thus far shown any proclivity to progressive reform in sexual theology; in fact, quite the opposite is the case.

The liberal Protestant moral theology has been critiqued by feminist theologians such as Ruether and Harrison for seeing the world colored through western glasses tinted by "modern institutions of marriage, family relations, and sexuality." Liberation theologians have criticized relational ethics on the grounds that they are too romantic in the area of community, family and conflict. Harrison says, "I suspect Protestant liberal intimacy-romanticism has combined [in American culture] to create a scenario of a perfect world where nature and human spontaneity would

merge to end all moral dilemmas (Harrison 1985, p.81).

Harrison (1983), in her book on abortion, describes in more detail the historic struggle of women to gain the reproductive right to their own bodies which current moral theology lacks. Her main criticism of both traditional Catholic and Protestant Christianity is its lack of balance, of inclusivity, of allowing the female experience and historiography to be admitted to the moral theology debate. This is the "paradigm shift" to which I referred--the advent of the birth control pill and the scientific possibility for women to--en masse--solve the problem of fertility (Harrison, 1983, p.161). As Harrison so aptly argues, this development places procreative power for the first time in modern history in the hands of women; and this is a powerful and profound political happening (Harrison 1985, p.125). This is a good sign, for anything which contributes to a more open, democratic style in sexual matters may contribute to the alleviation of rape, child abuse and child sexual abuse.

But in my opinion, liberal Protestant relationalist moral theology contains embedded in it the strains for a most productive look at the problem of the revision of moral theology in the late twentieth century. First, Reinhold Niebuhr articulated a philosophy of norms, particularly at the level of community, that pointed to reciprocity and mutual love as a basis for human beings to live together. At the level of institution and society, he advocated justice based on equality, which rests on the

advocated justice based on equality, which rests on the power of the people in that society. Although much of Reinhold Niebuhr's moral theology could be criticized on the basis of masculinist norms, at least here are embedded the seeds of a moral theology that will include a balanced male/female participation (Neibuhr, R. 1949, p. 190).

H. Richard Niebuhr also articulated a moral theology which encompassed the theory of "responsibility", or the life which he sees patterned in Jesus, the life of response. Ethics is therefore a hermeneutic exercise which involves the person in application of the gospel message of Jesus to make it come alive in his/her everyday life (Niebuhr, H.R., 1963, p.67). It is on the basis of living a life of response that James Nelson and Joseph Fletcher have articulated a "response-oriented" sexual ethic.

On the basis of this articulated ethic applied to sexuality, "we are called to respond to the presence and activity of God in the midst of varied and changing contexts. We are called to a life of responsible initiative and creative action in the newness of each situation and in its continuity with the past. Sexual acts are evaluated in terms of their fittingness to what God is doing and intending in the midst of human relationships" (Nelson, 1978, p.120).

Before turning to application of certain moral criteria to child sexual abuse, It will be helpful to first articu-

late a moral sexual theology which is a synthesis of fundamentalist, Catholic and liberal Protestant thought. A synthesis of these three styles, while difficult, is not impossible. It can be possible that what is fitting can also be right and good. But this is not romantic panacea. There is no theology without its theology of suffering, of the cross.

The premises are that (1) suffering exists, and (2) the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus has revealed the full scope of Christian existence, which is eschatological. The epistle to the Hebrews quotes Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane as revealing the ideal Christian attitude toward existence: the resurrection is seen as proof that the Jesus prayer was answered. The passage suggests that by reflection of the suffering, death and exaltation of Jesus, the Christian community has learned that the Kingdom of God, for which it prays (and in which love is the only effective law because God is love) is already eschatologically changing the world as we now know it, and has been doing so for 2000 years. God is through the community establishing the kingdom by transforming the present world with everything that is in it--nothing excluded--in the image of the risen Christ. That means that sickness and suffering, as we find it in this world, is also undergoing the process of transformation into the image and likeness of Christ, but the process has not come to an end. Christian prayer for the suffering is not for

God to make "pie in the sky" but for the divine transformation of the present order of the world and for the gift of the Holy Spirit: agape. The pentecostal coming of the Holy Spirit upon the church is the promise of that transformation, and everything done in the name of Jesus is the anticipation of the eschaton. In that eschatological light, suffering has taken on a new, positive meaning.

In this light the premise, "no pain, no gain," can be verified. In the area of sexuality, women in particular can testify to the suffering involved, if only biologically. The first experience of intercourse is painful to most women but is the means to intimacy with another. Childbearing is suffering but afterwards yields the joy of a new life. The purpose here is not to glorify suffering (Biblically, pain in childbirth is seen as a curse, as is all suffering); but to emphasize that when seen eschatologically suffering can take on a positive meaning. So we bear in mind the critique of romanticism of the relational ethic and eschatological romanticism with the acknowledgment of the reality of the cross and suffering in our moral theology.

I am grateful to Norman Pittenger, Anglican process theologian, for the insights which follow in my proposal for revisions in Catholic moral theology and in fundamentalist theology. Pittenger, moving from within a tradition which espouses teleology, advocates making the goal of sexual activity agape (Pittenger, 1978, p.65). When

the telos of sexuality is love, the natural law of Aquinas is expanded to include abstract notions instead of the limited Aquinian notion of only tempero-spatial concepts to be considered in a telos. Scripturally, the notion of love as the end of sexuality can bear up. Jesus says that to love God and neighbor as self--on these depend all the law and the prophets. Christian love is therefore by definition a participation in the love of God brought to the world in the human being in Jesus Christ. In the Christian doctrine of the incarnation we do not see the exception to the rule when God became human but the chief exemplification of all that is good, noble and human. Jesus stands before us as the completion of what God can and will do with our human striving for becoming who God has intended us to be. Christian love as the highest moral category therefore offers us an opportunity to correct the self-centered attitude that seems so "natural" to most human beings--what Reinhold Niebuhr rightly identified as the sin of pride (Niebuhr, R., 1941, p.186ff). Love becomes a moral imperative and not just a sentiment. Christian love furthermore opens for us the knowledge of who we are in the becoming.

In the human existence there is a God-given drive to love, to express ourselves in love and find in that reciprocity a fulfillment of others. The capacity to love is the most profound truth about humanity; we can love. The desire to love, of which sexuality is one of the signs,

even with all its distortions, is not accidental; it is integral to human life and existence. Furthermore, the love that constitutes the basic category of human existence will and must always reach out of itself in such a way that it becomes personal and personalizing, thus contributing to the creation of the other as a person (Pittenger, 1978, p.77). Receptivity, too, can be and is a creative process. Reaching out and receiving, reciprocity of intimacy--this, too, is part of our human inheritance.

To ascribe love as the highest good inevitably forces us to relativity in choices, but relativity is pinned to love. Thus relativity is not an "anything goes" concept but, as Pittenger says, "the perception that there must be adaptation of the central ethical principle to the given situation" (Pittenger, 1978, p.72).

As Nelson says, "Love is not the only principle of Christian sexual ethics, but it is the central one" (Nelson, 1978, p.109). The ethical principle and the central ethical norm is God as Love and as Lover. Related to this central norm are others, such as freedom, justice, truth, faithfulness, keeper of covenant, hope and peace, to name a few. Yet it speaks to human beings in their finite and sinful condition and to the circumstances in which we are placed. And this is both natural and inevitable since we are being made in the image of God, an image that in concrete manifestation in our midst is Jesus Christ (Pittenger, 1978, p.77).

Catholic sexuality begins to admit strains of this response-based morality in Vatican II in a paper which "called for a renewal of moral theology in which morality is seen as a vocation, a way of life, a total response to God's invitation lived out from the depths of a person's being" (Kosnik, 1979, p.110). Kosnik and other Catholic moral theologians are moving to a more response-oriented style of decision-making about moral theology.

For example, Kosnik critiques Aquinian theology on two fronts: the fact that morality cannot merely be objective but must also include the subjective criteria of human intent; and the fact that human sexuality is infinitely more complex than could have been imagined by a medieval thinker such as Aquinas.

Kosnik suggests that human sexuality under a telos of growth and integration be judged by certain norms. Among these norms are the self-liberating aspect of sexual activity, the quality of other-enriching growth that can occur, the degree of honesty, fidelity and joy that the act serves, the degree of social responsibility displayed, and the degree to which the act is life-serving rather than life-defeating. Obviously, with specific pastoral guidelines, some of the more obvious problems of the Aquinian theology that have been articulated would be solved (Kosnik, 1979, p.112ff)

Nelson, in articulating a relational ethic with agape at its core, suggests these guidelines for sexual acts:

First, love requires a single standard and not a double standard for sexual morality...Second, the physical expression of one's sexuality with another person ought to be appropriate to the level of loving commitment present in that relationship...Third, genital sexual expression should be evaluated in regard to motivations, intentions, the nature of the act itself, and the consequences of the act, each of these informed and shaped by love (Nelson, 1978, p. 127).

The motive should be love of God, self and one's sexual partner. The intention should be human fulfillment and wholeness. The nature of the act itself should be evaluated in light of wholeness and love. Some acts, such as rape or mutilation are inherently wrong. They are wrong not only because they are unloving, but because they are unjust. The consequences ought to be weighed and responsibility taken for the outcome of the act, as in the conception of a child, for example (Nelson, 1978, p.127-129).

These principles can then be applied to the problem of child sexual abuse. Often there is an unwillingness on the part of clergy to admit that problems of child sexual abuse exist in their congregations to the extent that the social service people indicate. Many are afraid it "would be damaging to their witness" to admit such problems. But denial is a problem inherent in the whole child sexual abuse syndrome, and if we subscribe to the principles suggested above, we must be honest and confront reality. And always the body of Christ has at its best taken on evil and done its best to eradicate it.

Among the most practical things we can do is to exhibit

an attitude of openness and honesty around the issues of sexuality. Families who are victims of incest have an uncanny knack for knowing who may be open to their problems and who may be judgmental, or deny or avoid the problem.

A revision of our sexual ethics may be in order to be able to admit the sexuality of youngsters and to take steps to protect them based on that knowledge. While education such as some child sexual abuse experts advocate is a key approach, there are other measures that may be taken to protect children, which include physically protecting the child whenever possible and believing a child who reports sexual abuse. These measures are discussed in more depth in the last chapter.

Churches and clergy must take advantage of the knowledge of the social and psychological sciences and their strides in understanding human sexuality to acknowledge that children are sexual beings (sexuality involving more than just genitality but involving our whole beings) and that children need information about child sexual abuse in terms that they can understand.

Further, we can know and be alert to the signs of child sexual abuse in a family. These indicators are listed below:

1. Role reversal between mother and daughter.
2. Extreme overprotectiveness or jealousy toward a child by a parent (parent sharply restricts a child's contact with peers and adults outside the home).
3. Inappropriate sleeping arrangements (child sleeps with a parent on a regular basis or with

both parents where she is exposed to sexual activity).

4. Prolonged absence of one parent from the home.
5. Mother who is often ill or disabled.
6. Extreme lack of communication between caretakers.
7. Inordinate participation of father in family (includes a father who is "symbiotic"--overly involved, as well as those who are aloof, withdrawn). The symbiotic father may be praised by churches as the "ideal" father because he is so close to his family.
8. Extreme paternal dominance of spouse.
9. Work or activity schedules which result in a caretaker (especially male) spending large amounts of time with a child or children.
10. Extreme favoritism shown to a child.
11. Severe overreaction by a parent to any sex education offered a child.
12. Caretaker who has been sexually abused as a child.
13. Geographic isolation of a family.
14. Overcrowding in a home.
15. Family has no social or personal support system.
16. Alcohol or drug abuse within a family (Peters, 1986, p.103).

We as the church can dispel the myths about child sexual abusers and child sexual abuse through education or actually speaking out in sermons. Some of the current myths are as follows:

1. Child sexual abuse is rare. In fact, at least 25% of girls and 10% of boys are victims of child sexual abuse.
2. Child sexual abuse is limited to the poor. Really, incidents are reported from all walks of life, but the median is a middle-income family.
3. Homosexuals perpetrate child sexual abuse. The fact is that the vast majority of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by heterosexual men and male teenagers.
4. Children make up stories about being abused. In

reality, children almost never lie about what happened to them, and when they do lie, it is almost always to protect the abuser. So the lying child tends to understate the problem, not overstate it.

5. It couldn't happen to me or anyone I know. Child sexual abuse is so common you probably know one or more victims personally (Delaplane, n.d., p.2).

Another practical thing we can do is to examine our church and our culture for systemic problems with authority. Treating Proverbs 22, 23, 26, and 29 and Ephesians 5 and 6 which deal with the father's authority in the home in a sensitive and egalitarian way can help to alleviate the mind of a child who is being sexually abused. Sensitivity when it comes to dealing with the abused child is also needed. One woman, to whom I spoke personally, and who asked to remain anonymous, was a victim of child sexual abuse. She came to her teacher, a nun, and disclosed the fact that her father was molesting her. "Sister said I was going to hell because I had lost my virginity," she said, "and then she urged me to tell my father no." Obviously, this approach by someone religious was not helpful at all to the victim.

The church can also make acknowledging the addictive behavior relative to child abuse a priority. Recognizing that repentance, prayer, conversion experiences, confession and other religious experiences, while important, will not cure the problem is essential. Like other addictive beha-

vivors, treatment is needed. In California, clergy are required to report child sexual abuse unless it is under the seal of the confessional. A recognition that legal intervention as well as therapeutic intervention may be the best approach is necessary to the solution to this problem. For unlike other addictive behaviors, the pleasure of child sexual abuse has no "bottoming out" experience of its own. Arrest, trial, sentencing, and serving the sentence often provide the only "bottom" to this addictive behavior.

Clergy and churches need also to develop good working relationships between therapists, child sexual abuse units, and other helping professionals. This is essential to becoming part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

Churches can also develop positive programs to be of assistance in the problem of child sexual abuse. First, churches can provide responsible child care. There is a critical need in the United States for child care as a result of economics and the reality of working mothers. A word of precaution, however, is in order. Where there is child care, there are those who would seek to prey on children. Churches must verify the references of employees. Often child molesters have a record--pastors and boards need to check before hiring.

Finally, churches can provide single parent programs and parenting programs. Education on the subject of child sexual abuse can be a part of these programs. And churches

may facilitate or host support groups for victims and families, including offenders. Healing groups such as therapy groups can be provided.

Perhaps the most important aspect to all this support involves being open, available, and letting that fact be known. Signs on rest room or other walls offering help to victims and offenders alike, sermons preached from pulpits, an open and affirming style toward sexuality, knowledge of the subject--these say loud and clear to families of sexual abuse that someone is there who can hear and help (Delaplane, n.d.).

Aside from these practical aspects dealing with the denial of the extent and reality of the problem, a revision of sexual ethics along the line of that advocated in this chapter may hopefully issue forth in the alleviation of some of the problem.

First, letting go of the rigid control religion has had on sexuality in this century will almost certainly result in an alleviation of the mechanics of sexual repression and the resulting demonization of the sexual urges, if other researchers cited are correct. Openly affirming that God created our sexuality and declared it "Good, very good" may eventually help to rectify the compulsive aspect of certain sexual acts.

Secondly, allowing for the relationality of sexual acts will result in a more open, freer attitude toward sexuality which will hopefully issue forth in a more responsible use

of sexuality. The casual observer who appraises Western society may see instead of responsible sexuality a morass of irresponsible behavior. But all the data is not in. In truth we've had only about twenty years of the possibility of relationality in sexual ethics minus the ever-present fear of pregnancy. More time, more education, less repression may indeed lead us to more responsibility.

Further, Masters and Johnson (1966) have proved clinically what we intuitively knew--that masculine sexual responses are quicker, more urgent, at times more compelling than are female sexual responses. Theology, for all its masculine preponderance, tended not to accommodate this fact of human sexuality in its ethic. Particularly in this century, the spiritualized Victorian morality of the West tended not to take into account the urgency and strength of male virility and instead encouraged "sublimation" and repression if a male were denied the regular sexual outlet of a wife.

Using the relational sexual ethic, masturbation can be encouraged rather than discouraged--so long as it is not used as a substitute for human relationships or a technique for avoiding real intimacy.

Nelson, in looking at teleology and deontology in sexual ethics, articulated norms around which Western society organized itself and which presumably arose from the Judeo-Christian ethic. He advocates that between the two extremes of understanding the rules as universally prescrip-

tive and as only useful guideline there exists a third possibility--to presume in the rule's favor. In his opinion, tried and tested moral rules have serious value in society and therefore have moral weight. But to presume in the rule's favor is to allow for exceptions and to place the burden of proof upon the exception (Nelson, 1978, p. 124).

For example, suppose a married man with two daughters has a wife who becomes physically incapacitated. If the man were a devout Catholic or a fundamentalist Protestant, he might interpret his body of moral information to say that adultery is worse than incest and thus commit incest upon one or both of his daughters. Using the responsible style of decision making, we would presume in favor of the rule prohibiting adultery. This man would have several choices. First, he could remain celibate for the rest of his life--the only option really left to him by the rule. But placing the burden of proof on him if he chooses to depart from the norm, he now has several choices open to him. First, should he be unable to remain continent, he could masturbate. This act is morally neutral using our ethic. Or he could visit a prostitute, or have an affair. In descending order of morality, based upon the potential harm to human beings perpetrated by his act, the LAST thing he should choose to do is have sex with his children.

The foregoing example is of course idealized, for it is doubtful our man will consciously make distinctions between

the choices as we have. But whatever he chooses to do, he has nevertheless made a choice, consciously or unconsciously. The hope is that by teaching people to use the responsible ethic, child sexual abuse may be alleviated in some measure.

CHAPTER 3

Authoritarianism, Religiosity and Child Sexual Abuse:

A Psychological correlational study.

Dispelling the myths about child sexual abusers:

Who is and is not the offender.

Child abuse occurs in all cultural, ethnic, occupational and socio-economic groups. Frequently, abusers had deficient childhoods or were abused themselves. They tend to be socially isolated and they are often experiencing marital and/or emotional conflicts.

Typically, offenders are divided into several categories for discussion. The FBI manual on pedophilia classifies offenders into pedophiles and incestuous fathers, the latter further divided into symbiotic and psychopathic personality types. The manual further divides the symbiotic personality into four classifications: tyrant, rationalizer, introvert, and alcoholic (FBI, 1984, p. 7).

What percentage of offenders are we talking about when we discuss pedophiles? All studies indicate that the percentage is low. Roland Summitt describes the more prevalent problem as incest. "Strangers, wierdos, kidnapers, and other monsters provide a convenient foil for both child and parent against a much more dreadful and immediate risk: the betrayal of vital relationships, abandonment by trusted caretakers and annihilation of basic family security" (Summitt, 1983, p.182). All available research is

remarkably consistent in a discomfoting statistic: a child is three times more likely to be molested by a recognized, trusted adult than by a stranger. The risk is not at all remote. Even the most conservative survey implies that about 10% of all females have been sexually victimized as children by an adult relative, including almost 2% involving the man in the role of the father. The latest and most representative survey reports a 16% prevalence of molestation by relatives (Summitt, 1983, p.182).

Of all the types of offenders we have described, pedophiles most fit the stereotype of the "dirty old man" hanging out around children to lure them into sexual activity. In fact, the FBI manual classifies two further types of activity to which pedophilia may lead: child pornography and child prostitution. Often pedophiles form societies and circulate newsletters. Sometimes they form organized "sex rings" (FBI, 1984, p.24).

The magnitude and scope of pedophilia, child pornography, and sex rings is difficult to determine. As we have previously noted, child molestation in any form is usually perpetrated in secrecy and its victims rarely report it.

However, there are a few studies to indicate the incidence of molestation by pedophiles as opposed to incestuous offenders. Gene G. Abel (1979), Director of the Sexual Behavior Clinic in the New York State

Psychiatric Institute, suggests that "child molestation is a more serious and frequent crime than rape" (Abel, 1979). Abel found that the child molesters he studied had molested more than 68 victims each on the average, as compared to less than one-third that many victims by rapists (FBI, 1984, p.24).

Police have also found large mailing lists in the hands of child pornographers--in one case, over 30,000 names (FBI, 1984, p.26). Further, interviews with pedophiles found them admitting to molesting startling numbers of children--one pedophile, for example, admitted molesting over 5000 boys.

Some people believe that if a man molests a boy this means that the man must be homosexual. Although it is possible for the pedophile to have latent homosexual tendencies, the figure for pedophiles who identify as homosexual is no higher than the figure for nonmolesters who identify as homosexual. In other words, about 10% of pedophiles are homosexual, as are about 10% of the general population. The notion that all pedophiles are homosexuals is a myth. One manual for pedophiles stated:

Pedophiles can be of either sex or any sexual orientation; i.e. heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual. Some pedophiles believing that their sexuality is natural, harmless, and an integral part of their personality, would not wish to be changed of their sexual orientation even if this were possible, which it is not. Pedophiles haven't chosen their sexual feelings. They just find themselves attracted to children (FBI, 1984, p.23).

This quote implies that pedophiles see their sexual feelings as a lifestyle and many would beg society for tolerance. However, given the research establishing the harm done to the victim, their pleas usually fall upon deaf societal ears.

While instances of pedophilia which are discovered usually get much media attention, most experts agree that the major problem is not child pornography, child prostitution, or pedophilia, in which the offender is unknown to the child, but incest. Laws exist now to take care of the problem of the "dirty old man", the child pornographer (the Supreme Court in *New York V. Ferber* held that child pornography was child abuse and not a form of expression protected by first amendment rights) and the parlayer of child sexual abuse. The problem is enforcing the existing laws we have (*N.Y. v Ferber*, 1982).

Incest is by far the more common of the two major types of child molestation experience. Incest generally develops in multi-problem families and develops along with other problems. Often incest occurs in conjunction with family trauma (such as death or illness of the mother), violence in the home, or drug or alcohol abuse. Most incestuous family members have poor impulse control. The perpetrator may easily be an uncle, a grandfather, a stepparent, or a sibling. In the majority of cases, as has been stated, child sexual abuse involves someone the child knows and trusts. But perhaps the most devastating of the incestuous

molestations concerns the father or father-figure. This is true because the child involved both loves the father while at the same time is experiencing betrayal by him. Less often the mother is involved in actual child sexual abuse, but when she is involved, the effect is equally as devastating to the child, perhaps more so because the mother is often seen as the nurturer in our society (FBI, 1984, p.9).

Although the dynamics of family child sexual abuse and pedophilia are similar, pedophilia involves individual psychological problems, while incest involves family dysfunction. An exploration of the effect of incest on the family follows subsequently. Many therapists, clinicians and social workers, as well as law enforcement personnel have concluded that father/daughter incest is rampant and of epidemic proportions (FBI, 1984, p.9).

In almost all cases of father/daughter incest, the father was incestuously abused as a boy or witnessed sexual relations between his own father and sisters (FBI, 1984, p.7). These men were emotionally deprived of affection as children and were often deserted by their own fathers. Meiselman notes that incest offenders are more authoritarian and domineering and that they manage to instill fear in the family (FBI, 1984, p.9).

Summitt notes that when the incest is discovered the offender almost always denies the charge. Further research indicated that when treatment began, almost all fathers,

during the course of the treatment, admitted that the child was telling the truth (Summitt, 1983, p.190). Further, the vast majority of investigations prove valid and most of the children were less than eight years old at the time of initiation (Summitt,178).

Who is the perpetrator in incest cases and how can we profile him--less often, her. (Only a small percentage of women molest their children but as we have said, the molested woman tends to marry a molestor.) The profile of the incestuous father, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, is relatively straightforward. He has been often sexually abused as a boy and when he reached puberty left home. As a result of his own family dysfunction he has been emotionally deprived of affection and attention. His own father often deserted him. He is typically authoritarian, domineering and inspires fear in his family. His demonstration of power typically manifests itself in a tendency to be overcontrolling and overly restrictive. He can be psychologically typified in one of two ways--the sociopath and the symbiotic personality.

The FBI bulletin (1984) recommends incarceration of the psychopathic personality because their conclusion is that no treatment will work with him. However, the prognosis is better for the symbiotic father. The FBI lists four types of symbiotic father--the tyrant, rationalizer, the introvert, and the chemical abuser (FBI, 1984, p.7).

The tyrant rules over the family and as we have said

exercises control unduly over the chosen incest victim. This type may threaten physical force in order to have sex with his daughter (or son, less often). He may use episodes of rage and/or loss of control of his temper to emotionally browbeat the family into submission to his demands. Outside the family the tyrant may seem like a milquetoast or a "Clark Kent" personality. He may take great pains to ensure his respectability within the community so that if his incestuous activities are ever found out, no one will believe that he could do such a thing. He may take great pains to "set up" the daughter/son so that they appear as the delinquent. Often the child will enable the perpetrator to do this as, when the child becomes an adolescent, s/he will begin to assert him/herself by acting out.

The tyrant is the one who rules his household with a rod of iron. He may be overtly overcontrolling, refusing to allow his children to exert natural independence from him. He may be jealous of his daughter's receiving attention from boys her own age. He exerts control through excessive disciplinary action. He may typically be considered the pillar of a community, a strong and demanding man. He may be a strong member of a local church, usually a church which advocates strict discipline and authoritarianism. This man may use threats of physical force upon his children, but rarely needs to use it as his psychological intimidation will usually work. The tyrant

may have genuine affectional feelings for his daughter and be terrified of anyone coming between him and her. He may seem to be paranoid at home but rarely will allow this characteristic to be seen outside of his family. He has a fear of intimacy and a great fear of people, both of which he attempts to satisfy in physical sex with his daughter (FBI, 1984, p.7).

The second type of symbiotic father, the rationalizer, feels guilty and uses rationalization as an ego defense to assuage his guilt. The rationalizer will use patent excuses for molesting his daughter such as "she asked for it", "she enjoys it," "it's a form of sex education" or "I'd rather have her learn from me than from some stranger." This man often confuses sex with love. The rationalizer justifies incest by believing that this is just his way of expressing his love for his child. He often cites unsatisfactory sex with his wife and/or a need to initiate his child into the sexual act himself "instead of some clumsy boy." He may justify incest on the grounds that the child needs to be educated about sex. The fact is, however, that all this is an ego defense mechanism for a guilty conscience to keep away the label, "deviate, child molestor" (FBI, 1984, p.7).

Rich Snowden, who conducted therapy sessions with offenders for a year, writes that offenders would loudly decry their victims and turn the situation around so that they were the true victims. These rationalizers would

proclaim that they were innocents who were seduced by a "Lolita" child or were entrapped by a scheming wife. The "Lolita" story is an embellished version of "she asked for it" (Snowden, 1982, p.4).

Freud, according to Rush (1980), was the chief provocator of this and even today provides a defense for the child sexual abuser of the rationalizer type. Alice Miller uses her whole book to repudiate the Freudian drive theory in favor of Freud's earlier theory of child sexual abuse (Miller, 1984, p.203). "In his essay on 'femininity' Freud wrote that almost all his patients reported sexual abuse at the hands of their fathers" (Miller, 1984, p.203). But he could not bring himself to believe that so many men in civilized Vienna were sexually abusing their daughters. So instead he decided that these women who had trusted him with their most painful secrets were lying. But that was not the end of it. He claimed that whenever girls report assault, they are actually revealing their innermost fantasies, expressing their true nature, and that these expressions mean that they want to be 'seduced'" (Snowden, 1982, p.4). As Miller so aptly puts it, therapists who ascribe to the drive theory can unwittingly subscribe to a Freudian version of, "She asked for it" (Miller, 1984, p.156ff).

In treatment, many child sexual abusers of the rationalizer type seem to be married to "evil women," another type of rationalization. The story goes, "a well-meaning natural father is brow-beaten by an insistent, controlling

wife into doing something terrible to his children." The typical rationalization is "My wife made me do it" (Snowden, 1982, p.5).

A last rationalization involves generosity. The generous father gives the children "what they like and what they ask for" (Snowden, 1982, p.6). These rationalizers would use candy, favors, and special relations with the child to extract sexual favors, which they had convinced themselves the children needed.

But in reality, the rationalizers who in therapy become honest with themselves admit that they used parental authority and power to command sex and the silence that goes with incest (FBI, 1984, p.7).

The third type of symbiotic perpetrator, the introvert, is a person who, lacking social skills, is unable to form normal adult male friendships and who turns to his family for his emotional and physical comfort. He finds that his demands are too much for his family and may find that his wife turns away from him. This is the family that "implodes", whose energies turn inward and who literally consume and devour each other and the family unit with them. As the father turns more and more to the family, if the mother has to be absent due to illness or even death; or if the mother turns away emotionally from the father, the father will turn to the daughters. It is this type of father who may begin a "gentle" initiation into incest that increases in frequency and intensity (FBI, 1984, p.8).

Summitt states:

The prevailing reality for the most frequent victim of child sexual abuse is not a street or schoolground experience and not some mutual vulnerability to oedipal temptations, but an unprecedented, relentlessly progressive intrusion of sexual acts by an overpowering adult in a one-sided victim-perpetrator relationship. The fact that the perpetrator is often in a trusted and apparently loving position only increases the imbalance of power and underscores the helplessness of the child (Summitt, 1983, p.182).

The introvert father or father-figure turns to his family for all his needs. This type is usually socially inhibited, shy, or socially retarded, unable to maintain normal social friendships. The more introverted he becomes, the more attracted to his children. Too often his control breaks down; he becomes depressed and initiates sexual contact with one or more of his children (FBI, 1984, p.7).

The last type of symbiotic perpetrator identified by the FBI is the alcoholic incestuous father, who may initiate sex with his children under the influence of a drug while in blackout. For him, the choosing comes when he chooses to take the first drink, because he has no control over how many others he will drink. The alcoholic incestuous father also perpetrates violence and other types of verbal and physical abuse on the family while in the alcoholic blackout. This father typically is in an agony of guilt, drinks or uses to assuage the guilt, and perpetrates more acts of which to be guilty (FBI, 1984, p.7).

The alcoholic incestuous father is one who has conflicting dependency needs--a need to be independent and at the same time a deep need to be cared for. He drinks because he is an alcoholic but he may perpetrate incest while under the influence of alcohol, which reduces his impulse control. Alcoholic families are very disturbed families in many other ways and often incest happens beside other traumas such as family violence, jailing of the father on drunkenness or disturbing the peace charges, abandonment by the father (for long periods of time) and verbal and psychological abuse (FBI, 1984, p.7). Someone has described life with the family of an alcoholic as like living with a machine gun in the living room on a revolving turret--one never knows when the gun will go off. The result of living like this for the family is a lack of knowing anything for sure--an inability to establish trust. And trust, says psychologist Erik Erikson, is the foundational stone of all that we learn emotionally and psychologically (Erikson, 1950, p.247). So families of alcoholics are disturbed in tremendous ways prior to any incestuous occurrences (FBI, 1984, p.5)

If one adds incest to the alcoholic home, often it is like adding the straw that breaks the camel's back. But the true victim is the child, who may take refuge in multiple personalities or insanity in order to cope with the many forms of trauma which are happening to her in the alcoholic home. There is emerging currently in the body of

psychological literature a profile of "Adult children of Alcoholics" with describable sets of symptoms of the "ACA syndrome". Incest is only one of many manifestations of this syndrome.

The last type of offender to be considered is the psychopathic type. The psychopath seeks stimulation, novelty, pleasure and excitement. This is the man without a conscience, with no feelings of guilt and no mechanisms available to him to understand the consequences of his action. These persons were so scarred in their own childhoods that they have developed a strange personality--one that is virtually untreatable. But the psychopath is manipulative, persuasive and charming. He may convince judges, juries and therapists that their treatments or remedies have worked with him, only to molest again. Psychopaths see people as objects and seek to use them to satisfy themselves. So although they can be persuasive and charming, the other side of their personalities are abusive and vicious. Incestuous fathers of the symbiotic type may be treatable, but most law enforcement officers and therapists agree: psychopathic incestuous offenders need incarceration and not treatment, as do most pedophiles, advocates of child prostitution and child pornographers (FBI, 1984, p.18).

These arbitrary categories are useful only to a degree, but obviously there is some overlapping of "categories". Some fathers, for example, seem to be pedophiles in the

sense that they prefer children to adult women. A study by Abel (1979) at the New York Psychiatric Institute, and quoted by Renvoize, examined the average number of victims of pedophiles and incestuous fathers. Homosexual pedophiles averaged thirty-one victims in their lifetimes. Heterosexual pedophiles averaged sixty-two. Heterosexual incest offenders had an average, however, of just over two victims per offender, but the victims were molested over a longer period of time. Another issue of importance which was revealed by this study was that incestuous fathers were more amenable to treatment than were pedophiles, suggesting that family dynamics might be more important than psychological dynamics in family incest (Renvoize, 1982, p.90).

Time and again--although there are no studies to my knowledge--writers and case workers refer to the respect for organized religion of the incestuous fathers. Roger and Florence Wolfe, therapists who work with offenders in Seattle, observed that offenders are "more religious than other people" (Renvoize, 1982, p.86). In Britain, Renvoize (1982) states that the London Times noted in an article, "Roman Catholics are vastly overrepresented among drug addicts, alcoholics, compulsive gamblers, prostitutes, night club strippers and convicted prisoners." Renvoize further states, "It would be interesting to know whether the American experience is repeated among members of other religious groups in Britain which exhibit something of the same fervor as that to be found in certain American sects"

(Renvoize, 1982, p.86).

The occupations of incestuous or sexually abusive persons are also stereotype-dispelling. People in the very professions one would hope to be free of sexual abuse are the very ones who repeatedly appear in the reports. There are boy scout leaders, preschool teachers, ministers, counselors, doctors, lawyers, professors, policemen, firemen, and hosts of other helping professions represented (Renvoize, 1982, p.84). The FBI manual on Pedophilia states,

A case which may illustrate this is a clergyman who ran a farm for wayward boys. He had the boys engage in sexual orgies with sponsors and clients of the farm which were filmed and sold as a remembrance or memento of the acts which transpired (FBI, 1984, p.24).

Over and over again it is theorized that sociological factors play the key role in father/daughter incest and psychological factors play the key role in other types of family dynamics. Adele Mayer (1983) in her book, Incest: A Treatment Manual For Therapy With Victims, Spouses and Offenders illustrates this theory with the following table:

Type of Incest	Motivation
Father-Son.....	Homosexual conflict
Older sibling-sibling.....	Unconscious conflicts
Mother-Daughter.....	Psychosis/Infantilism
Mother-Son.....	Gratification for Absent Father
Grandfather-Granddaughter....	Assertion of manhood

(Mayer, 1983, p.22).

Mayer further quotes a study by Slager-Jorne (1978) stating the family sociological dynamics as follows: "In father-daughter incest, the entire family is involved

and each member is active in perpetuating the abuse. Incest is motivated largely by urges to satisfy underlying emotional needs rather than by a need for sexual gratification" (Mayer, 1983, p.22). According to Mayer, certain typical indicators can predict with a fair amount of accuracy the probability of incest:

1. Marital discord and a poor sexual relationship between parents.

2. Unwillingness of the father to seek sexual relationships outside of the family.

3. Role reversal between mother and daughter which makes the daughter the central female figure in home with the responsibility of satisfying the needs of the father.

4. Conscious or unconscious condoning on the part of the mother of the relationship between father and daughter (Mayer, 1983, p.24).

We shall examine the sociological effects of incest on the family dynamics in more detail later.

We have discussed the individual molestor and who he is. Before concluding this section, I want to explore some more systemic kinds of issues that play into the problem of child sexual abuse--i.e., the sexism of the system.

Snowdon (1982) writes,

I considered myself a "nice guy" who "could never do such a thing." I wanted these men [his offender clients] to be monsters. I wanted them to be different from me, as different as possible. Yet as I heard them talking about childhood and their early teen years, I was less and less able to deny how much we had in common.

We grew up learning the same things about how to be men, though we practiced them in somewhat different ways or to different degrees. These were things we never asked to learn and never wanted to. Often they were forced upon us and more often we did our best to resist. But that was usually not enough, and one way or another these lessons in masculinity got inside us. We were taught that privilege is our birthright and aggression is our nature, so we learned to take, but not to give. We learned to get affection, or express it, mainly through sex. We expected to marry a woman who would provide for us like a mother, but obey us like a daughter. And we learned that women and children belong to men, and there is nothing to keep us from using their labor for our benefit and their bodies for our pleasure and anger" (Snowden, 1982, p.2).

The FBI manual on pedophilia states, "as long as society remains uncaring and permissive about incest, it will continue to thrive (FBI, 1984, p.18). The key to dealing with incest is not only on an individual treatment level but also on a societal level. The crime of sexual abuse of children goes grossly underreported, and when reported, children are systematically subject to almost more trauma than the sexual abuse itself by social agencies, hospitals and police.

Harrison (1985) in her book Making the Connections: Essays in Feminist Social Ethics says:

Morally evil behaviors that are frequently classified as sexual offenses--molestation or exploitation of young children, rape, publicly intrusive pandering of sexually explicit or obscene material, and the offensive hawking of sexual devices, including solicitation for prostitution--are wrong. In different degrees, not because they involve genitally explicit activity but because they express morally inappropriate power relations between people--physical and psychic assault or obvious insensitivity to the dignity of another person's rights and capacity for self-direction....these

acts are wrong because they involve the harassment or the abuse and degradation of persons who are relatively powerless to resist. Such acts intend humiliation or control (Harrison, 1985, p.112).

Feminists, like many liberal theologians such as Reinhold Niebuhr and his political realism, focus the problems of sexual violence at the target of power. The problem is not sex but control and abuse--and not abuse of sexuality but abuse of power. Harrison properly makes the observation that in a sex-phobic society these issues of violence and sexuality will become confused and sexual violence will take on an aura of being especially dirty or polluting. But, she contends, such acts need to be "desexualized" in order to understand them as the acts of assault that they are (Harrison, 1985, p.112-13).

Feminist theologians look historically at the church and lay a large portion of the responsibility for the way things are in Western society today at the feet of the church fathers who articulated their theology of male supremacy. Rosemary Ruether traces an antiwoman polemic through the writings of the early fathers and wonders that we have been able to evolve a theology of wholeness from so negative a beginning. We have examined this theology at length in chapter two, so further examination would be to belabor a point.

Feminist ethics would critique social mores of Western culture by looking at the sexual violence against women and children and acknowledging the historical biases of the

church in reinforcing if not creating the social conditions which foster this violence. Ruether states:

Perhaps the task of Christians today, as they take stock of this tradition and its defects, is not merely to vilify its inhumanity but rather to cherish the hard-won fruits of transcendence and spiritual personhood, won at such a terrible price of the natural affections of men and the natural humanity of women. Without discarding these achievements, we must rather find out how to pour them back into a full-bodied Hebrew sense of creation and incarnation, as male and female, but who can now be fully personalized autonomous selves and also persons in relation to each other, not against the body but in and through the body (Ruether, 1974, p.179).

Because of predispositional factors reinforced by parental authority and male power, incest continues in the United States. Miller writes,

The victimization of children is nowhere forbidden; what is forbidden is to write about it. Prostitution, the pornography trade, and the almost obligatory obscenity typical of traditionally all-male groups such as the military are part of the legalized, even requisite reverse side of [the] cleanliness and order [mandated by the observance of strict moral principles and hostility to instinctual drives]. [There should be] a conscious identification with the child as victim, in contrast to an unconscious identification with the adult (Miller, 1984, p.192).

There is, according to Medea and Thompson, a clash between the old sexual mores, in which a woman traded sex for love and security, and new sexual mores, in which men and women are expected to be autonomous individuals who are perfectly capable of being in control of every part of themselves, including the libido (Medea & Thompson, 1974, p.45). This comes about, as has already been stated, as a result of a paradigmatic shift in sexual mores stemming

from effective birth control methods which free women from fear of pregnancy in the sexual act. But confusion in the sexual marketplace reigns. The issue is power. Women are the target of aggression, but so are children--and the problem is not confined to female children. The pedophile likes children and often does not care which gender. In incest the victim is more often a girl but in at least one out of ten cases the victim is a boy (Renvoize, 1982, p.28). And once a victim, as we have said, the boy will tend to grow up an abuser, whereas the girl will grow up and marry someone who will tend to abuse her children. She will not often abuse them herself. In other words, a powerless boy-child will grow up to marry a power-yielding woman. Both are victims of a system which perpetuates itself.

The problem is one of systemic embedded patriarchy as well as an imbalance of power in interpersonal relationships. The patriarchy is composed of two elements: its structure and its ideology. The structural aspect is made up of organizations which relegate certain individuals, groups and classes to certain positions. Women, children, and non-white races are part of the groups which are relegated to less powerful positions. The maintenance of the hierarchy or structure is dependent on the maintenance of the ideology. The ideology is supportive of the principle of a hierarchical order and disavows an egalitarian order. The ideology thus legitimizes the order and thus makes it

right, natural and sacred (Gondolf, 1985, p.32). Sexual abuse of children can thus be viewed as an historical expression of patriarchal domination expressed against a "lesser" subgroup.

The male role is defined as follows: (1) a stigma attached to anything even vaguely feminine, (2) the need for success, status and admiration, (3) strivings for toughness, confidence and self-reliance, and (4) thriving on an aura of aggression, violence and daring. These attitudes are hazardous to male health as well as to the well-being of women and children. Aggressiveness and competitiveness cause men to put themselves in dangerous situations. Emotional inexpressiveness cause psychosomatic and other health problems. Men take greater risks and expose themselves to undue physical danger and psychological stress. The male role encourages specific behaviors that endanger health, such as tobacco smoking and alcohol consumption. And the male role discourages men from taking adequate medical care of themselves and from seeking counseling and other psychological help (Gondolf, 1985, p.43). Thus it is not only to the advantage of women and children to reform the system, but also to the advantage of the male. In other words, an oppressive system oppresses the oppressor as well as the oppressed. Perhaps the "advantages" of such a system are not such advantages after all!

So the offender in child sexual abuse is himself (less

often herself) a victim of child sexual abuse, or childhood violent abuse. He seems to be caught in a sexual compulsion of the repetition type. Except for the psychopathic category, perpetrators of child sexual abuse are amenable to treatment and generally hate themselves for what they are doing, while at the same time maintaining their ego defenses through denial and rationalizations. Pedophiles and other non-father-figures involved in child sexual abuse usually are involved as a result of psychological ego-defense mechanisms. Fathers and stepfathers are usually involved as a result of family disorganization and dysfunction. These individual problems are sometimes amenable to treatment (more often than not if conditions are right--motivation, discovery, etc.) . The offender may be of any socioeconomic level and in any profession. Often he gravitates to professions in which there is access to children, especially if he is a pedophile. But the men implicated in most ongoing sexual molestations are "not inferior in intelligence and psychotic. They are usually churchgoers, decent providers, and are usually of average intelligence. It may be only when their activities are discovered that they display neurotic behavior (FBI, 1984, p.3).

This is the profile of the individual molestor. Systemically, the men are socialized, as Rich Snowden has said, as most men are socialized. The systemic sexism and power problems in the society are more difficult to treat,

primarily because individuals are more amenable to treatment than systems are to reform. The denial surrounding child sexual abuse is typified by the publicity accorded some recent day-care centers whose employees have been accused of child sexual abuse. The end result is that only three of the defendants in one case have been bound over for trial. On a recent syndicated television talk show, parents discussing child sexual abuse stated that in every case of child sexual abuse that the participants and audience knew of, the schools were still operating and the participants free from the criminal justice system (Winfrey, 1986). When forced, many institutions will deal with child sexual abuse, but, because of the denial of child sexual abuse, the institution just wants to get the "sticky" matter over with and "get back to business". And the business is the business of denial and refusal to see.

The criminal justice system lands squarely on the side of the perpetrator. It lands there for two reasons: (1) a sexist system which sees a decent, hard-working man accused of despicable, unbelievable acts and does everything to get this nice man off the hook, and (2) an adversarial system which does not take into account the inability of children to testify in a manner that adults would.

The United States government has suggested certain community responses to the problem of rape which can be applied to child sexual abuse: among them community education, revision of criminal justice agency procedures, sup-

portive victim services, and law reform (Carrow, 1980, p.3). I would add that institutions, including the church, need to be about working on a revision of patriarchal model of male-female relationships, acknowledging the errors of patriarchal Christianity while affirming all that is good in their legacy. It is in this manner that theology can inform and abet secular disciplines to alleviate the problem of child sexual abuse.

Besides reforms in these areas, child-rearing needs to be in a system of egalitarianism and justice to the best of our ability. Children need advocates, especially the victims of sexual abuse. "It should be obvious to clinicians that the power to challenge and to interrupt the accommodation process carries an unprecedented potential for primary prevention of emotional pains and disability, including an interruption in the intergenerational chain of child abuse" (Summitt, 1983, p.191). If parents cannot or will not be advocates, if police act adversarial, if courts act punitive, it is Summitt's position that at least therapists can be the child's advocates. And this paper maintains that pastors can also act as the child's advocates. But in the therapeutic field, as Summitt admits, an evolutionary model has been followed in the area of child advocacy rather than a revolutionary one. And with information just becoming available to overcome the denial of clergy in the process of child sexual abuse, the ideal of clergy of all faiths opting to advocate for the

child rather than the perpetrator may be a long way away.

But the facts are undeniable. Child sexual abuse is more common than either clergy or laypeople think. It happens in our churches, and it involves families which we would never think as having problems, much less problems of incest. Ministers in the church can exhibit a willingness to be the vanguard when it comes to child sexual abuse rather than being part of the incredible denial of society that problems like these exist. The myth that religious men rarely rape or molest must be confronted. Sex education must begin at home and be supplemented by churches and schools. Renvoise states:

One of the characteristics of sexual offenders....was...that they were more religious than other people. This went hand-in-hand with a surprising ignorance about sex--and they come from families where information about sexuality is strictly restricted. They believe in the most extraordinary myths, and have very few facts. For some of these religious people all sex is sin, it's all bad, so what difference does it make what you do? (Renvoize, 1982, p.86).

To sum up this section about who the offender is, the following list of "Facts and Fallacies" is offered:

Fallacy: It is easy to recognize a child molestor because he is the "typical dirty old man" who always wears a raincoat.

Fact: He is not easily recognizable.

Fallacy: Only "Criminal types" and people of lower social status commit these crimes.

Fact: The offender may be a well-respected prominent member of the community. He comes from all walks of life and may be from any aspect of the social spectrum. Child molestation knows no cultural or economic boundaries.

Fallacy: Children should be warned only to stay away from strangers.

Fact: In the majority of cases, the offender is not a stranger, but rather, someone not only

known to the victim but the family as well.
Fallacy: Homosexuals molest children.
Fact: The offender is not a homosexual.
Pedophilia, per se, must be viewed as a
completely separate issue from one's gender and
sexual preference (FBI, 1984, p.8).

The Effect of Incest on the
Organization of the Family

Until the early 1970's it was thought by experts, psychologists and sociologists, that incest was not particularly harming, either to the socialization of the family or to the child. But with the advent of the women's liberation movement in the 1970's, adults molested as children (incest victims as children) began to come forward and express the pain they had repressed. Further, these adults, mostly women but more than a few men, made themselves available to researchers and therapists for objective research. This research validated what the adults molested as children knew, that there was immense psychosexual damage sustained by the children which often did not manifest itself until adulthood. As the problem began to be recognized, there began to be manifest a concern for those children who were still in the situation of being sexually abused. The first community-wide pilot program to help offenders and their victims was Parents United, started in the mid-1970's in Santa Clara County, California. Child sexual abuse is a devastating problem and if we could solve this social problem many other social problems would be solved--child sexual abuse is, in the

opinion of the experts, at the root of much chemical abuse, physical child abuse, family dysfunction, even crimes such as theft, murder and rape.

Incest as a Disrupter of Family Functioning as a Sociocultural Unit

At first glance, incest may be seen as a cohesion when we look at the family as a sociocultural unit. Undisclosed incest serves to isolate the family. The family begins to see itself as a very close-knit family and deludes itself into thinking it is a very normal family. Renvoize says, "Incestuous families bind themselves together with ropes of mutual dependence, fear of separation and secrecy, and if any one member tries to break away the bonds are ruthlessly tightened. Locked together by their emotional relationships they insulate themselves away from the rest of the world" (Renvoize, 1984, p.100). Therefore what at first appears to be a solidifier of the family as a sociocultural unit is, on a closer glance, dysfunctional.

If we look strictly at the function of keeping the family together, incest, like chemical abuse, functions to reorganize the family around keeping the secret. As father begins to function more and more like a "little god," the whole family reorganizes to accommodate the changes. The family, as we have said, may appear like a normal, very close-knit family. In reality, they are bonded in very destructive, emotionally crippling ways to individuals, as we shall explore later.

In many families where incest is widespread, lines of authority, demarcation and roles become unclear. The father or perpetrator has crossed the lines of demarcation and may actually become a child while at the same time exercising strict authoritarianism within the family. The child may be placed in the position of becoming the "little mother" by her own mother, who exhibits dependency characteristics. The mother, because of failure to deal with her own molestation as a child, is often in a subconscious collusion, as we have said. She misses clues which would alert her to the molestation happening to her child. Further, she may be so dependent upon the perpetrator that when told about the incest by the child or others, she may downplay the importance of what is happening or deny that it is happening or accuse the child of lying.

These lines of authority and lines of demarcation denoting roles become blurred in the incest family, yet the family shifts to accommodate the blurred distinctions in order to keep the secret and keep up the "happy family" myth. Barriers of age and relationship break down. Family rules are strict and not easily altered. Friendships with outsiders is strictly discouraged, because children may discover that they are not, as they have been told, "just like other families" (Renvoize, 1982, p.103-4).

Perhaps surprisingly to some, it is in sexually severe, not sexually lax, families that children are in most danger of sexual abuse. As Renvoize states:

Able, Becker and Skinner (1980) refer to a study by McConahay and McConahay, in which seventeen primitive societies were rated for the amount of sexual permissiveness, sex-role rigidity and violence contained within them. There was found to be no correlation between sexual permissiveness and violence, and no correlation between sex-role rigidity and sexual permissiveness. But there was a significant correlation between sex-role rigidity and violence, the latter being measured by the severity of punishment in child rearing, number of rapes, murders, tribal attacks, etc (Renvoize, 1982, p.105).

Of course, one needs to be careful in generalizing from non-industrial to industrial societies, but, as has been noted before, Renvoize points out, "people in the very professions one might think ought to be free of taint repeatedly appear in the reports (of incest)--teachers, policemen, boy scout leaders, ministers, lawyers, doctors" (Renvoize, 1982, p.84). And, again, "one of the characteristics of sexual offenders is that they were more religious than other people, because they come from families in which information about sexuality is strictly restricted" (Renvoize, 1982, p.86). So perhaps the assumption can be made that, just as in the study of primitive families, sexually severe families put the child at risk of sexual abuse.

So, while undisclosed incest may function as a sort of "glue" which may keep the family together, it is a dysfunctional glue. When the incest is disclosed, there are a number of reactions. Almost always the perpetrator denies that incest has occurred and accuses the child of lying; if

the child is not the one who discloses, the child may even lie to protect the family. The pivotal person in this family drama then becomes the mother. If she has any semblance of a healthy self-esteem she leaves the perpetrator or takes other appropriate steps to ensure the child's safety. If not, she will deny that the incest has occurred or minimize its importance and will take steps to ensure that the disclosure does not disrupt the way the family functions (Renvoize, 1982, p.116).

Obviously this sociological approach often does not sit well with many feminists. In their view the offending parent has a sexual deviancy and it is that which causes the problems in the family, not the other way around. But incest is a problem of family dysfunction in which inadequate people come together and react in ways in which they were taught. Mothers who were sexually molested as children are drawn to and marry men who were sexually molested as children and who will molest their own children. Thus incest as a family pattern needs family therapy to remedy (Renvoize, 1982, p.116).

The Effect of Incest Upon Individuals In the Family

Like rape, most incestuous activity between an adult and a child is not sexually motivated. There are other issues at work which lead to the offense--family issues, as we have said, of power and control and inability to deal with frustration, feelings of helplessness and inability to effect change in one's life. Fathers often cite unsatisfac-

ctory sex with their spouses as a reason for initiating incest with their children (FBI, 1984, p.7).

Treatment for the offender consists of evaluating the motives and potential for change. The FBI recommends incarceration for sociopathic offenders and treatment for symbiotic ones (FBI, 1984, p.17). Some researchers, according to Mayer, assert that no treatment is effective with incest perpetrators, while others assert the opposite and cite studies which show good results (Mayer, 1983, p.98). In general, according to Mayer, the indices for prognosis are: (1) age of onset, (2) duration, (3) intensity and/or severity, and (4) frequency of occurrence. She says, "If the age of onset is young and the duration long-term with considerable intensity and frequency of occurrence, the prognosis for rehabilitation is guarded (Mayer, 1983, pp.98-99).

Even for these indices to be evaluated, however, the incest must be reported and the FBI manual recommends that the criminal justice system must be involved to provide the impetus for the perpetrator to involve himself in treatment (FBI, 1984, p.18). When I attended the annual forum for Parents United in the Fall of 1986, I heard a panel of perpetrators-in-treatment admit to the audience that were it not for the involvement of the police, and their conviction by the courts, they would never have stayed around Parents United, a self-help group to which judges routinely sentence offenders (similar to the sentence to

Alcoholics Anonymous given to many chronic alcoholics).

What happens to the perpetrator when incest is reported is that the perpetrator is removed from the home. California state law demands that this occur until the family situation is evaluated. Often the perpetrator is not allowed back into the home until long after sentencing, when it is reasonably certain that he will not again molest his child. The family is then disrupted, but hopefully the dysfunctional glue will be dismantled by therapy and the family put together again with more functional ties.

The mother, as we have said, can be a colluder in the incest, often "setting up" the child to be molested by the father, (whom she has married because of his propensity to molest) by making the child her surrogate. The mother is often a dependent person who is abused herself, passive, compliant, and used to acquiescing to male authority (FBI, 1984, p.8).

If the child tells the mother about the incest, as we have said, several things may occur: she may leave the perpetrator, she may initially believe the child but later minimize the importance of the telling and not take steps to protect the child, or she (unfortunately, all too often) may accuse the child of lying or otherwise deny that the incest has occurred. Meiselman reports the following conversation between a mother and daughter in a therapist's office:

Daughter: (raising voice) You don't see how we

could have done it...

Mother: No, un-unh. No.

Daughter: (angrily) We went to the dump! We went out into the sticks! Right out there in the cow pasture! OK, you went away! Everybody was away from the house!! We've had it in your bed! We've had it in my bed! We've had it in the bathroom floor! (Mother utters a loud moan.)

Daughter: We've had it down in the basement! In my bedroom down there, and also in the furnace room!...

Mother: (shakily) I just can't believe it, I just can't, just can't...

Daughter: Mom...

Mother: (with a trembling voice) Just can't see how anything like this could possibly happen and how you could treat me this way.

Daughter: Because...

Mother: (shouting and weeping) After all I've done for you! I've tried to be a good mother, tried to be a respectable mother, and you accuse your father of something that's so horrible, that's...

Daughter: (shouting) Mother, it's true! You've got to believe it...

Mother: (to therapist) She's my daughter, and I love her, but I cannot believe this!
(Meiselman, 1978, p.173).

The message the mother is telling the daughter here is, "If you love me, don't tell me about this." Yet it is imperative that the child be believed. If the mother refuses, a therapist or any official who believes the child will often be enough to help to restore the lost sense of trust in cases of incest. The practical result of a mother not believing the daughter is that the daughter will often vacillate between insisting on the truth of the incest and retraction when the mother's denial makes her feel too guilty. It is in this way that the mother plays a pivotal

role in either alleviating the harmful psychological effects of incest or furthering them.

The effect of incest on the child is devastating. The child has been taught that she is to obey her father, to anticipate punishment for any show of defiance, and to believe that what her father does is unquestionably in her best interests. When confronted by her father's authority, she will acquiesce. Meiselman says, "the lack of force or specific threats in father-daughter incest should not lead to the conclusion that the daughter is actively cooperating in the activity. The daughter is usually passive--because of the father's authority, out of a sense of loyalty to the mother, believing she is protecting a younger sibling, blaming herself for the assault, and for many other reasons (Meiselman, 1978, p.149). The child, despite myths to the contrary, is not seductive nor does she seek out the sexual affair initially. Snowden, who leads a weekly counseling group for men who had committed incest, has this to say about child seductiveness:

Therapists generally report that incest offenders are non-threatening men, that they are charmers and wimps, and that their acts were merely "distorted love" or "misplaced affection". I listened carefully to these descriptions and did not know what to think about them, until taken by surprise one night in group, I found out just a little pushing will bring out what is really beneath the surface. I started a discussion about enforcing court orders and there was suddenly a tightening of muscles, a clenching of teeth, and a pounding of fists ... I sat there amid the rising anger, a grown man, and was afraid. Everything fell silent within me. I stopped hearing the staccato voices all around me. I could only think about a child facing one

of these men alone. The fear she must feel; the bottomless anger she must know is there, even when he is using her body politely, speaking gentle encouragements to her she must know that her father is still her master and she must either obey or risk his rage. I could only think about a child who had to find a way to survive assault by herself, who unlike me, had no escape, no home of her own to go to at 10 o'clock when group was over" (Snowdon, 1982, p.3).

Further, Snowdon tells of a man in his group who happened to turn on his television to the Donahue show and catch an incest survivor telling the story of her life. For the first time in his life, he found himself listening with his heart and not his emotions. He began to understand his daughter's terror, the fear with which she lived, the damage done to her, her sexuality and her psyche. He broke down and wept through the show; it was with the truth told from the point of view of the child and the woman that his therapy started. This man was one who had used the "Lolita" theory to justify his perpetuation, but when the truth was known, he finally was able to admit, "Of course she seduced me, but that was only because I seduced her into seducing me--I was the adult; I was responsible" (Snowdon, 1982, p.4).

Often victims of incest, far from being oversexed, display an aversion to sex with anyone. LaBarbera, in a study on seductive father-daughter relationships, finds evidence of fearful attitudes toward male sexuality in daughters involved in sexualized father-daughter relationships. And many incest victims are sexually

unresponsive (LaBarbera, 1984, p.949-950).

Besides the psychosexual problems reported in victims of incest there are many, many more. Summitt describes the child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome, which is characterized by secrecy, helplessness, entrapment and accommodation, delayed, conflicted and unconvincing disclosure, and retraction (Summitt, 1983, p.181).

Summitt states that "virtually no child is prepared for the possibility of molestation by a trusted adult; that possibility is a well-kept secret even among adults. ...The only consistent and meaningful impression gained by the child is one of danger and fearful outcome based on secrecy" (Summitt, 1983, p.182).

The second phase of the child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome is that of helplessness, including physical size and the developmental problems of children. Persons who work with child sexual victims are narrowing the mean age at which onset of molestation occurs. Currently the mean is nine years of age but 25% of the victims are five years of age or younger. Certainly these children are helpless. What follows for the child is entrapment in the situation and accommodation. Summitt says, "If the child did not seek or did not receive immediate protective intervention, there is no further option to stop the abuse. The only option left the child is to learn to accept the situation and to survive. There is no way out, no place to run" (Summitt, 1983, p.184).

The child often resolves that when he or she is old enough, he or she will stop the abuse and often then disclosure is delayed until the child feels enough independence to disclose. When this occurs, the disclosure often occurs in the context of other acting out and the child is not believed. Pressure is put on the child to recant, as we have seen first from the mother, and later from the criminal justice system. Both police and badgering attorneys try to get the child to recant. Summitt says:

"Beneath the anger of impulsive disclosure remains the ambivalence of guilt and the martyred obligation to preserve the family. In the chaotic aftermath of disclosure, the child discovers that the bedrock fears and threats underlying the secrecy are true. Her father abandons her and calls her a liar. Her mother does not believe her or decomposes into hysteria and rage. The family is fragmented and all the children are placed into custody. The father is threatened with disgrace and imprisonment. The child is blamed for causing the whole mess, and everyone seems to treat her like a freak. She is interrogated about all the tawdry details and encouraged to incriminate her father. Under all this pressure, she is likely to reverse her story" (Summitt, 1983, p.188).

The effects of the incest on the child include but are not limited to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, isolation and self-blame; pathological dependency, self-punishment, self-mutilation, selective restructuring of reality and multiple personalities. For many victims of incest the rage incubates over years and erupts in abuse against offspring. In the case of males, as has been said, the rage springs forth in overt sexual abuse and in the case of females in a tendency to allow their children to be

abused. Substance abuse is extremely common in sexual abuse victims who have attained adulthood, as is delinquency, antisocial behavior and crime. Victims frequently show posttraumatic stress disorder and sexual dysfunction. These are mountainous problems which society tries to address individually, treating, for example, drug abuse or delinquency without addressing the child sexual abuse which may be the root of many of these problems (Summitt, 1983, p.183).

Institutional Response: Church and Society

Randy Frame, writing in Christianity Today and quoted in the Preferred Guide, a newsletter for Preferred Risk Insurance, says:

"For as long as she can remember, Rebecca was sexually and physically abused by her parents, both of whom continue to be active in their mainline Protestant church. She remembers being prostituted as a child for her parents' financial gain. She was photographed in various sexual acts, including as a victim of sadism. She still shies away from cameras. Although the scars on her body remain, Rebecca's emotional wounds have begun to heal. However, she does not attribute her progress to the church, an institution she says denies that the problem exists. At one point she sought pastoral counseling, but says, 'All I got was an expression of disbelief'" (Frame, 1985, p.1).

Unfortunately, Rebecca's story is not unusual. I took a panel of adults abused as children before a group of my colleagues at the South Coast Ecumenical Council. They had a tendency to believe and empathize with the abused women, but one man abused as a boy in ritualistic Satanic abuse was called a liar. He was not lying; his story has been

corroborated by five of six of his older sisters; he was dedicated to Satan, baptized in cat's blood, tied up, tortured and sexually abused by a babysitter, an older woman whom all the children called "the witch lady", obviously for more reasons than that she looked like a witch. He developed multiple personalities and was institutionalized for a number of years, was released on medication. His therapist recommended he come to our church. Through continued therapy and support of loving people he began to be healed. Today he lives a normal life, though homosexual, and has not had a "personality split" for more than three years. This is an example of what the church can do by simply believing the incest survivor.

Society's response to the problem is still inadequate. The criminal justice system is not equipped for child testimony and as can be seen in some recent preschool cases, not adequate to handle what must be done to convict child sexual abusers. In the case of incest, we have seen what happens when incest is disclosed, the disruption of the family, the criminal justice system. Once in the criminal justice system, the offender has about a one in four chance of getting the help he needs. He may not be prosecuted, he may receive probation and be returned to the home, where he will almost certainly continue to molest his victim or another child, or he may be convicted. If he is convicted and he gets therapy his chances are the best that

he will not repeat his offense and that he will learn to deal with his impulses and frustrations in other ways. Nevertheless, the prognosis for the treatment of incest is not good. Mayer recommends that professionals evaluate offenders to distinguish between "fixated" and "regressed" child sexual abuser, or what the FBI calls the "psychopathic" versus the "sympiotic". Mayer agrees that the fixated offender has little chance of successful treatment. It is a tremendous problem which needs many resources and solutions in our society (Mayer, 1983. p.93).

At the very least pastors can acquaint themselves with the problem and be alert to those in the parishes who may need their help. Adult women who are dying with "the secret" in their midst, children who are currently being assaulted, men who are overwhelmed with shame and guilt--all these are the church's problems, too, and can be addressed in the church. Further, pastors can acquaint themselves with helping these people by knowing how to deal with posttraumatic stress syndrome and methods for healing this disorder. Clinical writings by those who have worked with war victims, especially Vietnam veterans, can help here. But most of all pastors need to be aware, informed, and open to the challenge of interrupting the vicious cycle of abuse of both boys and girls, that is happening in both incest and child sexual abuse.

THE STUDY:
CORRELATION OF AUTHORITARIANISM, RELIGIOSITY AND CHILD
SEXUAL ABUSE

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Submitted to: Doctoral Reading Committee
Spring 1986

Running Head: Authoritarianism and Child Sexual Abuse

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between authoritarian personality, religiosity, and authoritarian/democratic style in family configuration in child sexual abusers. The measurements used were the Traditional Family Inventory developed by Daniel J. Levinson of Harvard University and Phylliss E. Huffman (1955) of Western Reserve University; the F Scale for Authoritarian Personality developed by Harold Webster, Nevitt Sanford, and Mervin Freedman (1955); and a Study of Religious Belief developed by L. B. Brown (1962). The hypothesis was that I would find a high positive correlation between religiosity and authoritarian personality and authoritarian style in family dynamics. Of the 36 participants in the study, half were incest offenders participating in Parents United, a court-ordered group therapy organization. The other half were a group of men obtained from a random sample recruited from the Parent Teacher Association and colleagues and associates of parishioners of my church (when the PTA failed to yield enough participants). All control subjects were asked to be in a nuclear family setting with children present, regardless of whether the children were natural or stepchildren. Both groups were composed of a mixture of races but the Parents United group was somewhat more heterogenous than the control group. Two of the offenders'

marriages were interracial as was one of the control group's. Subjects' scores on the three instruments were compared for a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and significant comparisons were found between Religiosity and Authoritarian styles in governing families. A T-test was run for all the various combinations of groups. A highly significant correlation was found between the offenders and the control group in religiosity and in authoritarianism, and in autocratic/democratic family style. No significant correlation was found in authoritarian personality when compared either to the other two tests or when comparing any of the three instruments in the control group. It was suggested that the group therapy in Parents United might have been a factor in this finding and that further studies might be more accurate if the offenders were tested prior to entering Parents United. It was suggested that the sensitivity of the instruments or the smallness of sample might account for the lack of significant correlations in the control group.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY,
AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNING STYLE AND RELIGIOSITY IN FAMILIES

In the 1950's, religious life in America was at an all-time high. Attendance was high, optimism that life would be better was wide-spread, and families were solidly, cohesively together. So goes the lore, and the informal Gallup polls seem to confirm that lore. But as optimism decreased through the 1960's, so did religious life. Today, with the mood in the country swinging back toward "traditional values," religious life is again becoming vigorous and revitalized. According to the Gallup polls for 1957, 69% of those polled answered in the affirmative to the question, "Religion is increasing its influence on family life." In 1970 only 14% answered in the affirmative. But by 1982, the number had climbed to over 60% again (Gallup, 1982).

In line with this resurgence in religion as related to family life, a significant group of religious conservatives decries what is seen as "the decay of the family" and advocates a "return to the traditional family," meaning a return to a more male-dominant, patriarchial model of family life. In contrast, the literature of those researching child sexual abuse states that offenders within the family tended to be more authoritarian and more religious than average. In studying the literature, I found that most psychological and sociological studies focused on

the victim of child sexual abuse. Those that did deal with the perpetrator lacked a control group with which to compare the offenders as a group. I wished to test the assertions of the counselors in child sexual abuse that the offender is more authoritarian and more religious than average. I further wished to question whether there would be a significant correlation between the sociological index of authoritarian/democratic style of governing a family and the psychological indices of religiosity and authoritarian personality. This paper explores these questions.

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects were a group of 18 men who had been convicted by the courts of molesting their children and who had been referred as a part of their sentence to participation in Parents United, a nonprofit therapy group for families affected by incest. In Parents United, there is a group for offenders, one for nonoffending spouses, and one for daughters and sons affected by the incest. The control group was selected from Parent-Teacher Association of Long Beach, California; this yielded a self-selecting group of 9 subjects out of 50 questionnaires distributed; and colleagues of my parishioners who are distributed in various occupations--the latter yielded another 9 questionnaires. Three questionnaires were additionally received and were ruled out; one because of late arrival and two because they failed to sign the informed consent

form consenting to use the material. Good data-collecting techniques were followed and subjects were required to sign the consent forms prior to actual collection of the data. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured to the subjects by a written cover sheet explaining the project and its objective and through use of control numbers.

Demographic data are illustrated at the figure below.

Insert Figure about here

Instruments

Three instruments were used to measure the authoritarian tendencies, authoritarian traits governing family life, and religiosity of subjects. "A New F scale for Authoritarian Personality," devised by Webster, Sanford and Freedman (1955) was used to compute authoritarian tendencies (Validity, .77; Kuder-Richardson reliability, .88). The instrument consists of 149 items measuring compulsiveness, punitive morality, authoritarian submission, conventionality, religious fundamentalism, emotional suppression, ego--alien symptomatology, lack of self-confidence, projectivity, cynicism, romanticism, aggression and sense of victimization. The identical items appear in the MMPI and the CPI and have been widely used to measure authoritarianistic traits. A high score tends to authoritarian personality. Some of the drawbacks in the instrument include lack of some authoritarian clusters

described in other descriptions of authoritarian personalities (such as "power and toughness", "superstition", and "sex"); inability to distinguish between "personality" and "culture;" and the relatively low incidence of "false" items (only thirteen items were to be answered "False" while the rest were to be answered "True" if the subject tended toward authoritarian personality). The index was scored on a forced-choice true-false basis. The raw scores were computed by adding the number of true answers. A high score indicates a tendency toward an authoritarian personality.

"The Traditional Family Ideological Scale" developed by Levinson and Huffman (1955) attempted to measure the subject's position on a democratic-autocratic continuum. The scale deals with male roles of husband and father and the female roles of wife and mother with special attention to definitions of masculinity and femininity. Also measured are child-parent relationships and a few other indices of autocracy such as sex, aggression, and interpersonal relationships. Five of the aspects of the authoritarian personality were selected for this instrument because of their relationship to interpersonal, family relationships rather than intrapersonal, psychological traits. These were conventionalism, authoritarian submission, exaggerated sense of masculinity and femininity, extreme emphasis on discipline, and moralistic rejection of impulse life. Some drawbacks

to this instrument are: (1) unarticulated major variants to democratic/autocratic family ideology, (2) unarticulated and unmeasured relationships of ideology to action, and (3) unmeasured and unaccounted for cultural influences, such as parental family ideology as well as institutional cultural influences (church, school, etc.). The index was scored on a continuum ranging from -3, strongly disagree, to +3, strongly agree. Four points were added to each answer to obtain a positive raw score. In addition, 6 questions had reverse answers from the rest of the study. These answers were reversed in computing the score.

The third instrument used was "A Study of Religious Belief" developed by L. B. Brown. (1962). This questionnaire was developed with the assumption that "religious belief is a cognitive function with varying degrees of subjective certainty, and relationships with other psychological characteristics" (Adorno, et al, 1950, p.259). The questionnaire attempted to get at intensity of belief, personality measures of neuroticism/extraversion, and humanitarianism. Again, four points were added to each answer to compute a positive raw score. Some drawbacks of this instrument include the inability to state with certainty whether religious behavior is a cognitive or a emotive or other function, the need for caution in assuming that child sexual abusers who give answers indicating that they hold positive religious beliefs are therefore "religious" (professing religious beliefs may be a

compensatory action), and the fact that church membership and attitudinal acceptance of the church rather than personality variables are tested (Adorno, et al, 1950, p. 269).

Procedures

I computed the central tendency scores for all three instruments for both groups. I found no significant correlation between the F Scale and either of the other two indices. But I obtained a correlation between religious belief and democratic/autocratic style of family that was significant at the .05 level ($r=.437$) for the offenders group. Correlations between the three indices in the control group were not significant.

Insert Table 1 about here

I then computed the t values between groups. There was, according to the data, a significant positive correlation between offenders and the control group at the .005 level and beyond in each and every case--religious belief, authoritarian personality, and traditional family (democratic/autocratic style).

Insert Table 2 about here

Results

I tested the assertion of certain authorities working

in the area of child sexual abuse that child sexual abusers were more authoritarian and more religious than average (Summitt, 1983, p.221). I had expected to find, as did others, a correlation between authoritarian personality, democratic/autocratic family interactions, and religiosity. I found a significant correlation in child sexual abusers between autocratic family interaction and religiosity but this did not carry over to the authoritarian personality. I did not find a significant correlation between any of the measures in the control group. This was a surprising development since the initial presentation for all three instruments indicated significant correlations for authoritarianism and religiosity. In comparing groups, however, I found that the control group consistently and highly significantly scored lower on religiosity, authoritarian personality and autocratic style of relating in families. These figures (table 2) seem to confirm that even after treatment, child sexual abusers are more religious and authoritarian than average.

These findings must be mitigated by the cautionary material discussed under the section entitled "Instruments." Further, these findings are not conclusive if we bear in mind that the category "child sexual abuser" is a predetermined one and that it is difficult to find a sample of child sexual abusers other than those already defined as such by society, law enforcement, the courts,

and therapy. In other words, since we cannot obtain a random sample of child sexual abusers from the general population, we must rely on a predefined sample and statistics gained from such a sample may be skewed.

I hypothesize that the reason that we do not get a positive significant correlation between "traditional family" and authoritarian personality or between religiosity and the latter is due to the work done in Parents United. The mean time in group therapy in Parents United was just over two years, and in that time we would hope for some kind of change in attitude and/or behavior of the subjects. As to why no positive correlation between any of the tests in the control group when we could have expected to find such positive correlations, perhaps a larger sample was needed and could be found given a wider initial range of questionnaire distribution. Variables in sensitivity of instruments might be another possible reason.

Implications for Further Research

While my study tentatively confirms observation of those who work with child sexual abusers, several questions remain. First, the results of those who created the instruments need to be duplicated in the control group. Although Brown comes to a conclusion that religious belief might not be related to other cognitive systems, my work with offenders suggests a correlation, although his conclusions seem justified when it comes to control groups.

But O'Neill and Levinson(1954) concluded that "religious conventionalism" related significantly to authoritarian personality; and Levinson and Huffman (1955) state,

...it would appear that active participation in an institutionalized religion tends, by and large, to be associated with an authoritarian conception of the family and of human relationships generally. The problems of differentiating authoritarian from egalitarian religious orientations, and of determining their socio-psychological bases, remain relatively unexplored (Levinson & Huffman, 1955, p.253).

Although more work on such questions remains to be done, implications for both social policy and religious institutions are staggering should the results reported here continue to be duplicated. The answer to child sexual abuse would lie in providing a base of security and egalitarianism for the family, in egalitarian religion and denominations, and in nonauthoritarian personalities, not in entrenchment in an extreme emphasis on discipline (one of the traits of traditional family ideology), conventionalism, exaggerated sense of masculinity and femininity, and moralistic rejections of impulse life as some popular religious and political figures are strongly suggesting today.

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FIGURE

Demographic Data

	Parents United	Control Group
Mean Age	42.3 yrs.	37.5 yrs.
Children:		
Total Number	52	35
%Boys	37%	45%
%Girls	63%	55%
Race		
Caucasian	12	16
Black	2	0
Oriental	1	1
Hispanic	3	1
Mixed-Race Marriages	3	1
Religion:		
Roman Catholic	9	1
Fundamentalist Prot.	3	3
Liberal Protestant	4	9
Sect	0	1
Jewish	0	2
No Religion	2	2
Alcohol Abuse:		
*heavy	**4	4
Moderate	6	13
Use of other mind-altering substances:	3	1

*Heavy=more than one drink daily or more than seven per week.

**The questionnaire was not clear as to whether the use of mind altering substances was pre-or post-treatment for Parents United. Most do not now use alcohol or other drugs.

TABLE 1

Central Tendency Table for Religious Inventory, Traditional Family Inventory, and F-Scale for Each Group

N=18				N=18			
<u>Parents United</u>				<u>Control Group</u>			
		RI	TFI			RI	TFI
ΣX		6171	2426	ΣX		5478	1769
\bar{X}	34	2.83	134.77	\bar{X}	304.33	98.28	
(n-1)		28.47	22.12	(n-1)	21.35	18.97	
Median		127.5	339	Median		95	307
Mode		123,163	0	Mode		95,85	299
r		.437	sig at .05 level.	r		.181	N.S.

N=18				N=18			
<u>Parents United</u>				<u>Control Group</u>			
		RI	F-Scale			RI	F-Scale
ΣX		6171	1403	ΣX		5478	911
\bar{X}	342.83		77.94	\bar{X}	304.33		50.61
(n-1)	28.47		14.82	(n-1)	21.35		20.40
Median	127.5		82	Median	95		47.5
Mode	123.163		83	Mode	95,85		47,60
r		.263	N.S.	r		.227	N.S.

N=18				N=18			
<u>Parents United</u>				<u>Control Group</u>			
		TFI	F-Scale			TFI	F-Scale
ΣX		2426	1403	ΣX		1769	911
\bar{X}	134.77		77.94	\bar{X}	98.28		50.61
(n-1)	22.12		14.82	(n-1)	18.97		20.40
Median	339		82	Median	307		47.5
Mode	0		83	Mode	299		47,60
r		.106	N.S.	r		.052	N.S.

TABLE 2
t-Test Correlations Between Each Group

Traditional Family Inventory	Mean	SD(n-1)	N	t	
Parents United	134.77	22.12	18	24.28	sig. @
Control Group	98.28	18.97	18		.005
F-Scale	Mean	SD(n-1)	N	t	
Parents United	77.94	14.82	18	18.10	sig. @
Control Group	50.61	26.81	18		.005
Religious Inventory	Mean	SD(n-1)	N	t	
Parents United	342.83	28.46	18	22.13	sig. @
Control Group	304.33	26.89	18		.005

CHAPTER 4

Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Work

My hypothesis was that there would be a high correlation between the child sexual abuser's religiosity, family leadership style, and his authoritarianism. This proved only partially true--only traditional, patriarchal, autocratic family style corresponded with religiosity in child sexual abusers, and none of the three indices correlated significantly in the control group despite the indications to the contrary in the literature of the inventories. But there was a highly significant correlation when child molesters were compared to the control group in every case. Thus it is true that child sexual abusers of the incest-symbiotic type are more religious, more authoritarian, and more autocratic than their counterparts in the general population.

It appears in the survey that Roman Catholics are represented in a disproportionate number in the child sexual abuser sample. This would correspond to observations of Renvoize (1983) when she states that "Roman Catholics are vastly over-represented among drug addicts, alcoholics, compulsive gamblers, prostitutes, night club strippers and convicted prisoners" (Renvoize, 86). And, it might be added, child sexual abuse, if the sample is in any way representative.

If it is true that child sexual abusers are more religious, authoritarian, and more "traditional-family"

oriented, as the conclusions suggest, this paper has presented some aspects of child sexual abuse that can be addressed by the church and some methods of becoming part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

First, it has been suggested that the church as a sociological institution take a look at how the theology of sexuality has impeded progress and often aided the perpetrator of child sexual abuse. The church as institution is sociological and subject to the same sets of power abuses as any other sociological institution. It is the task of the church to be on its guard a priori because of this inherent systemic "temporal power problem" and to be ever vigilant to side with the victim of oppression and not with the powerful. In the case of child sexual abuse, the church needs to be on the side of the victim, not the perpetrator.

Secondly, it has been suggested that the church needs to examine its theology to move from repressive sexual theology to open sexual theology. The church needs a theology which FULLY affirms human beings just as they are, including their sexuality. The mystery of the incarnation means that God has sanctified our flesh including our sexuality. The theology of the church has been traced from three lines through history--Roman Catholic, liberal Protestant, and conservative Protestant--and found wanting. Specific suggestions for doing a sexual theology have been tentatively suggested, and no claims have been made to the final word on a theology of sexuality. More work needs to

be done in this area; and I have full hope that in the latter part of this century the task of the church will be to continue to explore what the incarnation means to human sexuality.

There will be some who, no doubt, object to the methodology in study of child sexual abuse perpetrators. I do not claim to be a social researcher—I am a pastor; but I have to the best of my ability followed good research techniques. Sampling is admittedly difficult and many psychologists would reject out of hand studying a group that has been pre-defined by society as "child sexual abusers". Nevertheless, since finding child sexual abusers in the general population is all but impossible, the thesis is that we must deal with what can be readily obtained in the area of data and groupings.

The concern is practical: that the church, which as an institution produces "religious" people, look long and hard at how child sexual abuse occurs. The practical concerns include acknowledgment by the church that child sexual abuse is one of the major disruptors of the nuclear family as configured in the West. Pastors and layworkers in the church need to become acquainted with the effects of child sexual abuse on the family; particularly if that child sexual abuse is incestuous in the classic sense; i.e., the perpetrator is a person within the nuclear family. This kind of sexual abuse is obviously the most devastating, because of the power problems involved and the helplessness involved. As has been shown, the child needs a "strong

one," an advocate, and if the perpetrator is a father, stepfather, brother, or (less often) a mother or stepmother, very often the result for the partner of the perpetrator is acute tension and divided loyalty which too often results in the child being not believed. Becoming a victim-advocate is one clear way the church can help.

Another indication for the church is in the area of modeling and teaching democratic roles for family relationships. Recently I was reading about a well-known conservative lecturer/pastor who appears on the Christian radio station and in print. He advocates "applying the rod severely" to deal with rebellious and/or misbehaving children. He further advocates that a parent apply the rod until a child "cries the soft tears of repentance" and not stop when the child is angry or crying loudly. This is not the kind of teaching or modeling which teaches a child that s/he has intrinsic worth, is loved, and fosters self-esteem. This particular pastor may be able to apply this kind of discipline without abusing his children, but I question the universal application of this kind of "discipline" because of the authoritarian nature of it and, by extension, the tacit approval of abuse other than physical, including emotional as well as sexual (Rosemond, 1986).

The church may be an advocate, too, for social reform. Currently the denial around child sexual abuse is being broken and people are slowly beginning to acknowledge that

the problem exists in the proportion that experts say it does. But there is a backlash beginning, even before the child advocacy programs get much more than off the ground. The church can again be a major spokesperson for the victims, both children and adults. Simply acknowledging that the problem IS widespread, that children don't lie about sexual abuse, and being supportive of what agencies may be available to help is one small way the church can help.

In terms of further research, I propose several approaches. First, a reliable instrument needs to be discovered, if one exists, or developed, if one does not, to discriminate between "authoritarian religion" and "nonauthoritarian religion". Questions asked from this study might include, "Are there certain denominations or groups that are more authoritarian than others? If so, how does this fact affect child abuse and child sexual abuse?" Other questions arising from this study could include, "What are the characteristics of religious groups that are authoritarian? What are the socialization patterns of these groups? How do(or do not) these patterns perpetuate themselves?"

The second area would revolve questions around the traditional nuclear family and child-rearing techniques. There is currently a sharp disagreement over public policy surrounding "the family" in American society. Conservative religious leaders and politicians alike decry the decay of the family, meaning the traditional,

autocratic patriarchial family. According to conclusions in this study, this autocratic family style certainly provides an atmosphere in which child sexual abuse can at least flourish if it does not actively foster child sexual abuse. This latter consideration is a question of which came first, the chicken or the egg, but the autocratic family can be, according to the study, more of a fertile breeding ground for child sexual abuse than the democratic family.

This consideration raises enormous social policy considerations. Instead of monies spent in attempting a return to a more traditional family, perhaps western societies ought instead to abandon the autocratic patriarchial family as a vehicle that was broken to begin with, and instead focus on programs which effectively promote democratic families.

In the end, those in the church and those in the social arena owe it to future generations to face these questions for every little child who suffers from child sexual abuse and for adult victims who have survived such abuse.

What suggestions can be implemented by ministers and counselors in the church to combat the hidden, monstrous problem which is like a cancer eating away at our families and children? The sheer magnitude of the problem is staggering: one in four girls and one in ten boys equals about 35 million people in a population of 200 million. These raw numbers, as we have seen, are probably

underestimates of the problem, and the numbers translate into an enormous social problem.

Several practical suggestions:

1. Find out the facts about child sexual abuse.

"Taboo" is a word that has been used about incest and child sexual abuse. As one survivor put it, "the only thing that is taboo about child sexual abuse is talking about it. Too many seem to be doing it" (Armstrong, 1977, p.7). Denial pervades the subject; denial that children can be sexual, that the father or father-figure (less often the mother) could be doing "such a thing," denial that the child is telling the truth, and so on. Further, the myth prevails that the victim is somehow responsible and guilt is fostered by well-meaning but ill-informed adults whom the child has decided to trust. Knowing that children who lie understate the problem, for example, is invaluable knowledge to a minister or laycounselor.

2. Be alert for signs of abuse in your congregation.

Once the symptoms of child sexual abuse are known they can be recognized. Offenders need help or incarceration. Families will suffer disorganization. Remember to presume for the child; s/he is powerless in society and the offender is a "con artist." In all this, the church should be present both in its prophetic role and as a healer. Churches particularly need to be careful if they have a church-supported day-care center, as they are prime targets for pedophiliacs.

3. Cultivate a "shalom" community where adults

molested as children who are suffering in silence can feel it is safe to share "the secret." To do this one needs to do more than just "be open to a person's sharing in counseling". Pastors need to preach on the problem in prophetic mode and say that they are open. Incest victims are used to people not believing their story; if pastors take this step, people will come to be healed.

4. Be aware of the many ways of healing the "little child hurts" the adult survivor will be bringing. Many methods have been suggested for healing the inner grief wound, including group therapy, prayer, psychotherapy, "regression therapy," anonymous 12-step programs, and many other effective therapies. Most important, however, the survivor needs someone to whom they feel they can relate, someone who will understand and empathize with them. And they need someone who is not afraid of the strength and enormity of the emotions which have been repressed and will be willing to deal with the deep tears of grief, the almost murderous rage, and immobilizing guilt of the adult survivor.

The church has, all too often, been the agent for alienating the incest victim. With proper information and proper perspective the church can become the agent of wholeness. We've only seen the tip of the iceberg in the area of child sexual abuse. The purpose of this paper is to challenge the church--pastors, counselors, religious--to become those agents of healing and wholeness in this most devastating "silent sin."

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